CONTEMPLATIONS AND MEDITATIONS

(Public Life of our Lord)

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A. M. D. G.

CONTEMPLATIONS AND MEDITATIONS ON THE PUBLIC LIFE OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

ACCORDING TO THE METHOD OF ST. IGNATIUS

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH

BY A SISTER OF MERCY

REVISED BY

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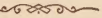

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CONTEMPLATIONS AND MEDITATIONS

ON THE

PUBLIC LIFE OF OUR LORD.

CONTEMPLATION CI.

THE TRANSFIGURATION OF OUR LORD.

Preparatory Prayer.—Grant, O my divine Jesus, that, during my meditation, all my intentions, all my actions, and all the operations of my soul, may tend purely and solely to Thy service and the glory of Thy divine Majesty. Come, Holy Ghost, fill the hearts of Thy faithful, and kindle in them the fire of Thy love. Send forth Thy Spirit, and they shall be created, and Thou shalt renew the face of the earth.

1*st Prelude.*—'And after six days Jesus taketh unto Him Peter and James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into a high mountain apart. And He was transfigured before them . . . And behold there appeared to them Moses and Elias talking with Him. And Peter said to Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here; if Thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles—one for Thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. And as He was yet speaking, behold a bright cloud overshaded them. And lo a voice out of the cloud saying: This is My beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him' (Matt. xvii. 1-5).

2nd Prelude.—Represent to yourself Mount Thabor, and there behold our divine Lord accompanied by His three most faithful disciples.

3rd Prelude.—Divine Jesus, teach me to love Thee, in order that I may follow Thee from Thabor to Calvary, with an unshaken constancy and generosity.

1st Point.—Consider the persons: our Lord, His three disciples—Peter, James, and John. Their divine Master has chosen them from the rest to make them His confidants. Why? Because they love Him more than the others. My sweet Saviour, give me also a great love for Thee, that with Thy dear disciples I may merit a love of preference. On a sudden Jesus Christ is clothed with celestial glory; His countenance shines as the sun, and His garments become white as the most dazzling snow, and at the same time Moses and Elias appear discoursing with Him. Oh, what joy for these apostles! What joy, also, for me some day to behold Jesus glorified!

2nd and 3rd Points.—Listen to the words and consider the actions. Jesus converses with Moses and Elias. He speaks of His passion, of His suffering, of His ignominy. What, my Jesus, even in the midst of Thy glory, are these the subjects of Thy thoughts and discourse? He answers me, Yes; because My love for thee is ever present to Me; everywhere My thoughts are of being thy Saviour. Grant, then, sweetest Jesus, that I also may remember Thee unceasingly, and think only of loving Thee, and of suffering for Thee. 'St. Peter, transported with admiration, cries out: Lord, it is good for us to be here; if Thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles' (Matt. xvii. 4). He forgot that this life is not the period of lasting happiness! If this gladdening spectacle of the glory of his good Master causes him so much joy, although it be but imperfect and can only last for an instant, what will it do when he shall see Jesus in heaven? What will it do when I myself shall behold Him? Peter has no sooner finished speaking, than a bright cloud covers Moses and

Elias, who disappear from sight. . . . At the same time a voice is heard out of the cloud, saying : 'This is My beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased ; hear ye Him' (Matt. xvii. 5). My adorable Lord, it is to Thee this voice renders so glorious a testimony; I am overjoyed, and with all my heart I offer Thee the homage which is Thy due. The apostles, filled with a holy fear, fall with their faces to the ground. Jesus approaches them, and touching them, says to them : 'Arise, and be not afraid.' . . Then, raising their eyes, they see no one, but Jesus alone, in His usual appearance. They come down from the mountain, and Jesus forbids them to tell anyone what they have seen, until He shall be risen from the dead.

Colloquy with our Lord and with the happy witnesses of His Transfiguration.—Let us beg the holy apostles to communicate to us their admiration, their joy and courage, together with the attachment with which this signal favour will doubly inspire them towards their divine Master. Let us render to our adorable Saviour our homage of love and respect; begging of Him to strengthen our souls, that so we may be in dispositions to follow Him, not only to Thabor, but also to Calvary, there to suffer for His love all that He shall please to demand of us.

Résolution.—To bear willingly for the love of Jesus all the trials divine Providence may send us to-day.

Offering of the Resolution.—My God, I offer Thee this my resolution ; unless Thou deignest to bless it, I cannot be faithful to it ; from Thy goodness, then, I hope to obtain this blessing, which I ask of Thee in the name and in the merits of Jesus, my divine Saviour.

Holy Virgin, Mother of my God, and also my Mother, My good angel and holy patron saints, obtain for me the grace to keep this resolution with unswerving fidelity.

Spiritual Bouquet.—Jesus, the well-beloved Son of the Father, teach me to love Thee and to follow Thee.

Prayer.

Soul of Christ, be my Sanctification;
Body of Christ, be my Salvation;
Blood of Christ, fill all my veins;
Water of Christ's side wash out my stains;
Passion of Christ, my comfort be.
O good Jesus, listen to me:
In Thy Wounds I fain would hide,
Ne'er to be parted from Thy side.
Guard me should the foe assail me;
Call me when my life shall fail me;
Bid me come to Thee above,
With Thy saints to sing Thy love,
World without end. Amen.

Examen of the Meditation.—1st. Did I carefully prepare the points of my meditation, and resolve on the fruit I would draw from it? 2nd. Did I recall the subject of it to my mind before I went to sleep? 3rd. Did I, from the moment of awaking, occupy myself with it, and try to exclude other thoughts? 4th. Did I place myself as I ought to do in the presence of God? 5th. Did I make the preparatory prayer and the preludes? 6th. Did I preserve a becoming reverence in my attitude? 7th. Did I take care not to pass lightly from one point to another? 8th. Did I reflect on the mystery before me with a sincere desire of profiting by it? 9th. Have I made the colloquies, asking for grace to practise the virtues that God set before me? 10th. Have I made resolutions for the day, and determined on what occasions I shall put them in practice? 11th. Have I made a Spiritual Bouquet?

MEDITATION CII.

INSTRUCTIONS OF JESUS ON LIVELY FAITH.

'There came to Him a man . . . saying: Lord, have pity on my son, for he is a lunatic, and suffereth much . . . And I brought him to Thy disciples, and they could not cure him. And Jesus answered: . . . Bring him hither to Me . . . And the child was cured from that hour. Then came the disciples to Jesus secretly, and said: Why could not we cast him out? And Jesus said to them: Because of your unbelief. For, amen, I say to you, if you have faith, as a grain of mustard-seed, you shall say to this mountain: Remove from hence hither; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible to you.'—MATT. xvii. 14-19.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—Figure to yourself a vast plain, at the foot of Mount Thabor, where Jesus is surrounded by His disciples and by a great concourse of people.

2*nd Prelude.*—'I do believe, Lord; help Thou my unbelief' (Mark ix. 23). Render it efficacious and lively, that so it may increase Thy holy love within me.

1*st Point.*—We do not obtain prodigies of grace because our faith is too weak.

'If you have faith as a grain of mustard-seed . . . nothing shall be impossible to you.' Is it true that these words of our divine Lord to His apostles are addressed equally to us? We cannot doubt it; the saints of every age furnish us with incontestable proofs of the prodigies granted to the liveliness of their faith. I, then, by imitating them, can share the same favours; I can, like them, obtain miracles for the sanctification of my own soul and for the salvation of others. My divine Lord, grant me grace to understand what I must do in order to obtain this faith. In the depth of my heart Thou tellest me that the first means is to ask it of Thee, since it is an effect of Thy grace and a gift of Thy bounty. I ask it of Thee O Lord, saying from my heart: 'I do believe; help Thou my un-

belief' (Mark ix. 23); render it efficacious; give to it that degree of vigour and ardour to which Thou canst refuse nothing.

2nd Point.—Our faith is too weak because we are wanting in confidence and humility.

Why was the faith of the apostles imperfect? Because they neither knew their divine Lord nor themselves sufficiently. Is it not to the same causes I ought to attribute the weakness of my faith? Help me, O Jesus, to sound the state of my soul on this point. If I knew thoroughly Thy power, Thy goodness, Thy love, together with the earnest desire which presses Thee to grant me choice graces for myself and for others, I should pray with that holy assurance to which Thou canst refuse nothing. If, on the other hand, I knew perfectly well the nothingness, the misery, the corruption which belong to me, I should acknowledge myself utterly unworthy of Thy graces, and this just judgment would lead Thee to grant them unto me. Confidence and humility are, then, the two foundations of a lively faith. Do Thou implant them within me, O my dear Jesus; Thou knowest that of myself I cannot acquire them, and that Thou alone canst bestow them on me.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us adore Him lovingly, and thank Him for the instructions He has just given us. Let us ask Him very earnestly for a lively faith and sincere humility, that so we may be in the disposition to obtain all we shall ask of Him for our salvation or for that of others. Let us promise Him to do all that depends on us to acquire these precious virtues, praying Him to bless our good will.

Resolution.—To offer up all our prayers with a great deal of humility and confidence.

Offering of the Resolution, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—'Lord, increase our faith' (Luke xvii 5).

Prayer.—Pater Noster.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CIII.

INSTRUCTIONS OF JESUS ON HUMILITY AND SIMPLICITY.

'And they came to Capharnaum. And when they were in the house He asked them: What did you treat of in the way? But they held their peace; for in the way they had disputed among themselves, which of them should be the greatest. And sitting down, He called the twelve, and saith to them: If any man desire to be first, he shall be the last of all, and the minister of all.'—MARK ix. 32-34.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—Represent to yourself the house which Jesus has just entered, and contemplate Him surrounded by His disciples.

2*nd Prelude.*—Divine Jesus, Who dost teach me simplicity and humility by Thy example and by Thy words: make my heart docile to Thy adorable lessons by giving it a relish for the hidden charms of these precious virtues.

1*st Point.*—Jesus wishes His disciples to be humble.

'If any man desire to be first, he shall be the last of all, and the minister of all' (Mark ix. 34). The world ignores the preciousness of humility, but the disciples, the children of Jesus, find it infinitely sweet, since He has taught it to them by His example and by His words. Humility was not to be found on the earth; Jesus brought it down from heaven. He has selected it as the favourite virtue of His Sacred Heart, and recommended it to all those who belong to Him. My divine Lord, I belong to Thee: teach me, then, to love and practise humility; Thou sayest that he who would be the greatest in the kingdom of heaven must be the servant of all. Thou dost unite example to precept, for Thou hast not come upon the earth to be ministered unto, but to minister; attract me, then, to the love of a virtue so precious; teach me to own my faults sincerely, and for love of Thee to bear with all those who may accuse me falsely; teach me to shun the esteem of others, and to

esteem everyone, rendering kindly to each all the services they may exact from me. Make known to me interiorly that it is by such acts I can become like unto Thee, O my only Love, and I will embrace the practice of them with joy.

2nd Point.—Jesus wishes His disciples to be simple.

'And Jesus calling unto Him a little child set him in the midst of them,' whom when He had embraced, He said to them, 'Amen, I say to you . . . unless you become as little children you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven' (Matt. xviii. 2, 3). The character of a child is made up of candour, innocence, and simplicity; these are the amiable virtues Jesus wishes to see in us; it is His will that we go to Him with a pure and upright heart, confidingly, as little children go to their mother; it is His will that our relations with our neighbour be without artifice or affectation, accompanied with a gentle kindness, and animated with pure and sincere affection. All this will be easy to us if we take our adorable Lord for our Model. Let us contemplate Him in the solitude of Nazareth. What unalterable sweetness! what unobtrusive care to do all things perfectly! His Sacred Heart was instinct with sincerity; He acted to please His Father alone. Mary watched Him and imitated Him. My holy Mother, teach me what thou didst learn of Him during those thirty years of a life so uniform, so hidden, so unknown. Holy example of Jesus and Mary, Thou dost teach me that simple souls love a common and ordinary life, not liking to be singular in anything; they who are humble, love God and despise all else. O amiable virtue of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, be thou the cherished virtue of my heart also.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us offer Him our homage of adoration and love, begging Him to open unto us His divine Heart, that we may draw thence the love of that sincere humility, of that noble, that lovely, that candid simplicity, which has so much value in His sight. Let us also pray to Mary to help us to acquire these two virtues,

asking pardon for our faults. Let us make several acts of love and confidence, accompanied with sincere promises and earnest petitions.

Resolutions.—To keep our heart united to that of our blessed Lord during the day, and in our conduct to endeavour to imitate His humility and simplicity.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—Jesus, meek and humble of heart, make my heart like Thine. 'Unless you become as little children you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven' (Matt. xviii. 3).

Prayer.—Soul of Christ, etc., page 4.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CIV.

ANATHEMAS OF JESUS AGAINST THOSE WHO SCANDALIZE THEIR NEIGHBOUR.

'He that shall scandalize one of these little ones that believe in Me, it were better for him that a mill-stone should be hanged about his neck, and that he should be drowned in the depth of the sea. Wo to the world because of scandals . . . Wo to that man by whom the scandal cometh.'—MATT. xviii. 6, 7.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—The same as the preceding meditation.

2*nd Prelude.*—My God, give me prudence, and preserve me from the misfortune of ever being a subject of scandal to my neighbour.

1*st Point.*—We ought to have the greatest fear of scandalizing our neighbour.

'He that shall scandalize one of these little ones that believe in Me, it were better for him that a mill-stone should be hanged about his neck, and that he should be drowned in the depth of the sea' (Matt. xviii. 6). Jesus has a horror of those who scandalize others by their counsel or

their example; the most painful wound that can be given to His adorable Heart is thus to render useless all the attentive cares of His love by dragging souls into the road of perdition. 'Wo to the world because of scandals' (Matt. xviii. 7), He exclaims in holy indignation. My adorable Lord, I am not of the world, nevertheless, Thy menaces penetrate me with fear. Could I be miserable enough thus to advance the schemes of hell by becoming an occasion of sin for my neighbour? Thou tellest me in the depth of my soul that certain levities, certain liberties, to which souls that belong to Thee sometimes yield through human respect, may give a more dangerous example than the conduct, openly bad, of the votaries of the world. Thou tellest me that faults in themselves slight may become very serious by their dangerous results on weak souls, whom our example injures instead of supporting. Yet they have a right to expect support from us. What shall I do, O Jesus, if this misfortune has been mine? I will come and shelter myself in Thy Sacred Heart; I will beg of Thee to repair the evil I have caused, I will make strenuous efforts in future to give edification and to gain as many souls for Thee as shall be possible.

2nd Point.—We ought to grieve with Jesus over the scandals of the world, and the evils resulting from them.

'Wo to the world because of scandals' (Matt. xviii. 7). Let us dive into the Sacred Heart of our divine Lord, and comprehend, if it be possible, how bitter is the pain which He experiences in seeing so prodigious a number of souls lost on account of the scandal they meet with during their life. These souls are the purchase of His Blood; He loves them so ardently that He would be ready to give His life anew for each one of them should this be necessary. He has merited, prepared, and offers them eternal happiness, and He beholds them led away by a perverse world, which drags them along with it to perdition. If we love Jesus, can we be insensible to so great a misfortune? Permit it not, O my adorable Lord; grant that I may share Thy

grief, which is a portion of that bitter chalice which was presented to Thee in the Garden of Olives. Alas! if in sharing the sorrow of a friend we mix some sweetness with it; if Thou hast deigned to give the title of Friend to Thy true disciples; is it not for me a consoling duty to unite myself to the sufferings of Thy Sacred Heart? Divine Jesus, most faithful Friend, grant that I may deplore with Thee the evils caused by the scandals with which the earth is filled, and inspire in me an ardent zeal to gain for Thee some of those souls of which the world and hell tries to deprive Thee.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us ask Him for zeal for His glory and the salvation of souls, with grace to oppose the scandals of the world by an edifying example. If we have had the misfortune ourselves of being a cause of scandal to others, let us endeavour to conceive a lively sorrow for the sin, asking forgiveness of Jesus, and recommending to His Sacred Heart anyone we may have injured in this way.

Resolutions.—Not to grant the world anything against our conscience. To resist our predominant fault, that we may edify those with whom we live.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet. — Jesus, zealous Lover of souls, make my heart like Thine.

Prayer.—Pater Noster.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CV.

JESUS THE PASTOR OF SOULS.

'The Son of Man is come to save that which was lost . . . If a man have a hundred sheep, and one of them should go astray, doth he not leave the ninety-nine in the mountains, and goeth to seek that which is gone astray? And if so be that he find it: Amen, I say to you, he rejoiceth more for that, than for the ninety-nine that went not astray. Even so, it is not the will of your Father Who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish.'—MATT. xviii. 11—14.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—Again represent to yourself our Lord in a house in Capharnaum, instructing His disciples.

2*nd Prelude.*—Jesus, my loving Shepherd, grant me grace to know thoroughly Thy love for me, and to respond to it with all my heart.

1*st Point.*—Jesus came down from heaven to save us. 'The Son of Man is come to save that which was lost' (Matt. xviii. 11). Love brought Jesus down from heaven; His mercy led Him to have compassion on us, who were lost through our sins. He left His angels in heaven, and came down on the earth to save us from eternal death; this is the meaning of the parable of the Shepherd, who leaves the ninety-nine sheep on the mountains, to go and seek after the one which was lost. But let us admire how great the love is of the Sacred Heart of Jesus; He assures us that the salvation of that strayed sheep causes Him more joy than the constancy of the ninety-nine He had had no trouble to seek after. Good Jesus! tender Shepherd of souls! why is it that all hearts do not love Thee? Why do they give way to diffidence and fear, when all in Thee speaks only confidence and love! It is because Thou art not known. Make Thyself known, O incarnate Love; set all hearts on fire with Thy sacred flames. I was that lost sheep Thou hast sought after and found again. Ah!

deign to draw me to Thee with ties so strong that I may never more be able to separate myself from Thee.

2nd Point.—Jesus desires us to labour for the salvation of souls.

'Even so, it is not the will of your Father Who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish' (Matt. xviii. 14). The love which Jesus has for us, and the salvation which He has procured for us, would, doubtless, merit infinite gratitude, were we able to show it; what, then, shall we do for Him, after all He has done for us? His goodness offers us a means of requiting His benefits; this is to labour zealously for the salvation of souls. To do for our neighbour what Jesus has done for us, is to offer Him a return worthy of the graces He has bestowed on us, since He has said: 'Amen, as long as you did it to one of these My least brethren, you did it to Me' (Matt. xxv. 40). It is most true that the success of our zeal is the effect of His grace, and not of our own efforts, but if we be truly humble, His Sacred Heart will attribute to our labours the good It has worked through us, and will deign to receive it as a pledge of our love. What a subject for encouragement. God loves souls infinitely; it is His will that not one perish, and I can work at the salvation of many . . . Divine Jesus, fill my heart with a pure and ardent zeal, and give me the consolation of being able to say, in Thy words, at the end of my life: 'Father, none of those whom Thou gavest me is lost' (John xvii. 12).

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us thank Him affectionately for that burning charity which brought Him down from heaven to save that which was lost. Let us humble ourselves at His feet for our infidelities and even the resistance we have so often opposed to His goodness when He has gone in search of us. Let us consecrate ourselves entirely and for ever to so loving a Shepherd, praying Him to inspire us with holy zeal in labouring to the best of our power for the salvation of souls.

Resolutions.—Not to let any opportunity pass to-day of making the Sacred Heart of Jesus known and loved. To pray for the conversion of sinners.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—'The Son of Man is come to save that which was lost' (Matt. xviii. 11).

Prayer.—Soul of Christ, etc., page 4.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CVI.

JESUS RECOMMENDS THE FAITHFUL TO UNITE TOGETHER IN PRAYER.

'If two of you shall consent upon earth concerning anything whatsoever they shall ask, it shall be done to them by My Father Who is in heaven. For where there are two or three gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them. —MATT. xviii. 19, 20.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude*, page 12.

2*nd Prelude.*—Divine Jesus, grant me the spirit of prayer, and a tender cordial charity towards my neighbour.

1*st Point.*—The advantages of union in prayer. 'If two of you shall consent upon earth concerning anything whatsoever they shall ask, it shall be done to them by My Father Who is in heaven' (Matt. xviii. 19). Our adorable Master earnestly desires that we should unite in prayer; and He has promised the most precious benefits to this holy practice. When we pray together, the fervour of the most holy supplies for what is wanting in the imperfect; it is a prop for the weak and for sinners; these obtain abundant graces, which, probably, would have been refused had they proffered their requests unaided. Union in prayer is a surer means of procuring general edification, and of draw-

ing closer the ties of fatherly love on the part of the children of God. When we unite together in prayer, Jesus deigns to join us and pray with us, according to His promise, when He said: 'Where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them' (Matt. xviii. 20). My God and my Lord, ought I not to esteem myself happy when I can join in the public exercises of religion, and pious practices of the body to which I have the happiness to belong; in a word, in all the prayers in which I may hope to be upheld by the powerful suffrages of Thy most faithful friends? Grant me, then, the grace ever to esteem as I ought so precious a boon, and to neglect nothing in order to profit fully from it.

2nd Point.—The hearts of those who pray ought to be united by charity.

'Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them' (Matt. xviii. 20). Prayer made in common is very powerful with God; but that it may have all its efficacy it must emanate from hearts united together by the charity of Jesus. Our blessed Lord desires earnestly that His disciples shall have but one heart and one soul. This He recommends to them in all manner of ways, and makes the most magnificent promises in favour of those who shall faithfully observe this sweet precept, which He declares to be His own. This holy union was the brightest ornament of the early Church. Jesus wishes this still to be the badge of all who belong to Him. He wishes to console Himself in them for the prevailing coldness of charity, which causes Him such acute pain. My adorable Lord, I ought thus to apply myself earnestly to the practice of this kindness and charity, which is so necessary a support to union of hearts. I ought to forestall others, by my obliging manners, kind actions, and spirit of peace and union. I ought not to be exacting nor susceptible, but yielding and forbearing. My Jesus, bestow on me these amiable virtues; may they unite me to my neighbour as by so many bands of love; grant that we may be one in Thee; deign

to dwell in the midst of us, and render all our prayers efficacious, according to the promise Thou hast made to us.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us make at His feet several acts of adoration and love, and thank Him for the sweet communion of prayers and spiritual treasures which He has established among the members of His Church. Let us ask His pardon for all the faults we have committed against the spirit of union and charity; begging of Him to replenish us with His Spirit, to the end that we may truly be His disciples.

Resolutions.—To practise meekness and charity to-day towards all those with whom we live. Not to dispense ourselves, without a just reason, from the public prayers at which we are able to assist.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—'Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them' (Matt. xviii. 20).

Prayer.—Pater Noster.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CVII.

DOCTRINE OF JESUS ON THE FORGIVENESS OF INJURIES.

'Then Peter came unto Him and said, Lord, how often shall my brother offend against me and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith to him, I say not to thee till seven times; but till seventy times seven times.'—MATT. xviii. 21, 22.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—Still keep before your mind the house where Jesus is sitting instructing His disciples.

2*nd Prelude.*—My divine Lord, grant me grace to be always ready to forgive from my heart all sorts of injuries and offences.

1*st Point.*—Jesus wishes us to forgive at all times and under all circumstances.

'I say not to thee till seven times, but till seventy times seven times' (Matt. xviii. 22). The Sacred Heart of Jesus is essentially love, His doctrine is one of meekness, forgiveness, mercy; all His precepts and all His examples breathe nothing else but goodness and indulgence. If we see the head of the apostles doubting if he ought to forgive even up to seven times, it is because he had not yet received the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of his Lord and Master; but since the Holy Spirit has descended on the Church, all the saints, walking in the footsteps of their divine Model, have taken revenge on their enemies only by loving them and praying for them. Divine Jesus, I am the privileged child of Thy Sacred Heart, and this title obliges me to fulfil more perfectly than many others the duty Thou dost impose on me; fill my heart, then, with true charity, which shall compel me to pardon not only serious faults, but still more that countless mass of little contradictions, whose numberless details offer me so frequently the opportunity of testifying my love for Thee. Yes, I will bear with and forgive, from the bottom of my heart, all offences committed against me; and when I shall have to appear before Thee, to render Thee an account of my life, I shall have the sweet assurance of being forgiven in my turn, since, O good Jesus! Thou hast said, 'Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy' (Matt. v. 7).

2*nd Point.*—The cause of the difficulty we have in forgiving. Since the forgiveness of injuries is so pleasing to Jesus and of such advantage to ourselves, why should we feel so much pain in practising it? It is because the love of self is not entirely banished from our hearts; Jesus makes known to us that this vice is the source of all heart-burnings and rancour, portraying to us those who refuse to forgive under the character of a wicked servant, who, having received from his lord the remission of a considerable debt, purposed, nevertheless, to exercise the greatest severity

towards one of his companions who owed him a trifle: Then his lord, being told what he had done, Jesus adds, was angry, and delivered him over to the torturers. 'So also shall my heavenly Father do to you, if you forgive not everyone his brother from your hearts' (Matt. xviii. 31-35). Never permit, O my Saviour, that I should ever incur such terrible vengeance. I wish to forgive, but alas! the depth of my heart is unknown to me. I am ignorant if it is entirely free from these dangerous dispositions, which have on occasions, perhaps, caused me so many falls. My safety is then in Thee; be Thou my Protector; free me from my own corruption; grant that I may experience and imitate Thy mercy, and, after having been my salvation, it will constitute the object of my eternal praises.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us adore Him with love and respect; thanking Him for the law of grace and mercy which He came to establish on the earth. Let us pray to Him to grant us the grace to fulfil it perfectly by having a heart filled with indulgence and kindness towards all those who may offend us.

Resolutions.—To forgive willingly, and at once, all offences and injuries.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—'Forgive us our tresspasses as we forgive them that trespass against us' (Matt. vi. 12).

Prayer.—Pater Noster.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

CONTEMPLATION CVIII.

THE CURE OF THE TEN LEPERS.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—'And as He entered into a certain city,

there met him ten men that were lepers, who stood afar off, and lifted up their voice, saying: Jesus, Master, have mercy on us. Whom when He saw He said: Go show yourselves to the priests. And it came to pass, as they went, they were made clean' (Luke xvii. 12-14).

2nd Prelude.—Represent to yourself the road in which Jesus was, when the ten lepers addressed their prayer to Him.

3rd Prelude.—My divine Lord, grant me grace to pray well and to be filled with gratitude for the benefits I receive from Thee.

1st Point.—Consider the persons. Our divine Lord . . . His apostles . . . the crowd . . . and the ten lepers, who stood at a distance. The Law obliged them to this, but they do it also from a sentiment of humility. Everyone has a horror of their dreadful malady; but our good Jesus, has He also the same? . . . No, He has cast His eyes on them afar off, and His divine Heart draws them secretly towards Him . . . Draw me also near Thee, my divine Saviour, in order to cure the maladies of my soul.

2nd and 3rd Points.—Listen to the words and consider the actions. The ten lepers who stood afar off cry out with one voice: 'Jesus, Master, have mercy on us' . . . (Luke xvii. 13). This prayer is quickened with a lively faith: they hope for a miracle; it is animated with respect and confidence: they call Jesus their Master; they pray together in charity, and for each other . . . Ah, Jesus, if Thou didst see in me such dispositions when I pray, what graces I should receive! . . . As soon as their divine Master perceives the lepers, He commands them to go and show themselves to the priests . . . They immediately obey, and in obeying they are cured . . . My Jesus! why, then, do I so often resist Thee, I, Thy child, when even strangers show themselves docile to Thy commands? . . . Alas! it is because I desire too feebly to experience the effects of Thy divine power; grant that I

may feel the wants of my soul . . . One of the ten lepers, seeing himself cured, retraced his steps immediately, praising God aloud, and, prostrating himself at the feet of Jesus, returned Him lively acts of thanksgiving . . . My Jesus, gratitude is pleasing to Thee, while, on the contrary, ingratitude wounds Thy adorable Heart; Thou dost testify this by saying: 'Were not ten made clean? And where are the nine?' (Luke xvii. 17.) Then Thou dost recompense the conduct of the leper by a blessing still more precious than the first one, for Thou sayest unto him: 'Arise, go thy way; for thy faith hath made thee whole' (Luke xvii. 19). Grant me grace, O Lord, to imitate the leper's gratitude; may my happiness consist in rendering Thee continual acts of thanksgiving, and in proving to Thee my love by an entire and constant fidelity.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us offer Him our homage of adoration and love, asking Him for the grace of a lively faith like unto the lepers', together with such a profound sense of our spiritual miseries as may lead us to desire earnestly to be delivered from them. Let us express our gratitude to Him for the numberless benefits with which He has loaded us. Let us pour out our heart in His presence, speaking to Him confidingly of all that interests us, and asking Him for all the graces we need.

Resolution.—To have recourse to Jesus, by frequent elevations of our heart, to obtain deliverance from our spiritual infirmities.

Offering of the Resolution, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—Jesus, Master, have mercy on me.

Prayer.—Soul of Christ, etc., page 4.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CIX.

JESUS THE SOURCE OF ALL HEAVENLY BLESSINGS.

'Jesus . . . cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come to Me and drink. He that believeth in Me, as the Scripture saith, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.'—JOHN vii. 37, 38.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—Represent to yourself our Lord standing in the Temple, and calling unto Him all those who thirst after justice.

2*nd Prelude.*—My Jesus, grant me grace to desire ardently all those virtues of which Thou art the Source, and fill me with a holy zeal to diffuse in my turn, in favour of others, the spiritual blessings Thou shalt have imparted to me.

1*st Point.*—Jesus replenishes with blessings those souls who draw near unto Him.

'If any man thirst, let him come to Me and drink' (John vii. 37). The thirst of which Jesus speaks here, is the ardent desire of all that concerns our salvation, and He calls to Him all those who desire to receive this abundantly. Why should I not go and draw from His adorable Heart the precious treasures which He offers me with so much goodness? Jesus is the Author of life; in Him is every virtue, and He burns to communicate each one of them to me. If, then, I am deprived of them, it is because I neglect to draw near to Him. Jesus, my adorable Lord, Thou dost speak to me from the depths of Thy holy Tabernacle, giving me the most loving invitations; if I languish under the weight of my miseries, Thou sayest to me with goodness: 'Come to Me . . . you that labour, and are burdened, and I will refresh you' (Matt. xi. 28). If Thy grace excite within me fervour and holy desires, Thou dost invite me to come and quench

my thirst in Thy divine Heart, the sacred source of all heavenly blessings. Can I refuse to draw from it with joy? No, my Jesus, I will answer to Thy call, I will come and pour forth my heart at the foot of Thy Altars, I will place myself at Thy Sacred Table, and nourish myself deliciously with Thee. My sweet Jesus! A single moment passed in Thy sacred abodes is preferable to entire centuries spent in the pompous dwellings of sinners: fix my heart for ever at the foot of Thy holy Tabernacles, and grant it may there find its peace, repose and joy; may the abundance of Thy graces purify it more and more, and enrich it with all the virtues with which Thou dost wish to see it adorned.

2nd Point.—Jesus makes use of well prepared souls to diffuse His graces everywhere.

Rivers of living water shall flow from the hearts of those that believe in Him. Jesus is not satisfied to enrich with His gifts those souls alone who respond to the advances of His love; He makes of them so many reservoirs, as it were, destined to communicate to others the superabundance of the graces with which He has supplied them. A soul in which Jesus dwells, gives edification everywhere; there exhales from it an odour of life which causes piety to be loved; it speaks of God in a manner which makes Him loved; its example is like a persuasive voice which preaches forcibly the love and practice of virtue. It is impossible not to envy its happiness; it makes Jesus known, and establishes His reign in souls. My divine Lord, Thou tellest me, interiorly, that such happiness may be mine. The abundant graces with which Thou hast vouchsafed to provide me, engage me forcibly to procure Thy glory and the salvation of souls, as much as shall be in my power. Ah! I cannot doubt but that Thy divine Heart has chosen me for so noble a mission; accomplish then within me all the designs of Thy love, and deign to make use of me

according to Thy good pleasure, in the labour of making Thee known and loved.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us adore Him as our God, in Whom every good gift is to be found. Let us beg of Him to excite within us a thirst for virtue and the goods of heaven, producing several acts of love and desire, in order to engage Him to pour on us His graces. Let us offer and consecrate ourselves to Him to labour for the salvation of souls, according to the designs of His holy will.

Resolutions.—To practise recollection and the spirit of prayer. To labour, according to our power, for the salvation of souls.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet. — 'As the hart panteth after the fountains of water, so my soul panteth after Thee, O my God!' (Ps. xli. 2).

Prayer.—Soul of Christ, etc., page 4.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

CONTEMPLATION CX.

JESUS PARDONS THE WOMAN TAKEN IN ADULTERY.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—Jesus was sitting in the Temple instructing the people. 'And the Scribes and Pharisees bring unto Him a woman taken in adultery; and they set her in the midst, and said to Him: Master, this woman was even now taken in adultery. Now, Moses in the law commanded us to stone such a one. But what sayest Thou? . . . And He said to them: He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. . . . But they, hearing this, went out one by one' (John viii. 3, seq.).

2nd Prelude.—Figure to yourself the interior of the Temple.

3rd Prelude.—Divine Jesus, grant me perfect confidence in Thee, and give me grace to imitate, as nearly as I can, the infinite love of Thy Sacred Heart.

1st, 2nd, and 3rd Points.—See the persons, listen to the words, and consider the actions: Jesus Christ is preaching in the Temple; He is sitting. . . . All are listening to Him. . . . Some of the Scribes and Pharisees arrive leading a woman who has been surprised in sin. Arrived in the middle of the assembly: 'Master,' they exclaim, 'this woman was even now taken in adultery,' and deserves to be stoned: 'What sayest Thou?' . . . The sinner, overwhelmed with confusion, exposed to the gaze of everyone, has nothing to allege in her defence. . . . The law of Moses is express; the presence of the accusers excites the mercy of our Saviour. . . . The crowd is in expectation. . . . What is Jesus going to say? . . . He stoops down to the ground, and writes some characters upon it. . . . Ah! good Jesus, are these the precepts of the new Law? . . . At length, raising Himself up, He contents Himself with saying these words: 'He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her' . . . (John viii. 7). Again stooping down, He wrote once more on the ground. . . . The Scribes and Elders withdraw; they are followed by the Pharisees. . . . Jesus remains alone; the culprit is standing before Him. . . . 'Then Jesus said to her: Woman, where are they that accused thee? Hath no man condemned thee? Who said: No man, Lord. And Jesus said: Neither will I condemn thee. Go, and now sin no more' (John viii. 10, 11). O Sacred Heart of my Saviour! Who would not know Thee, and knowing Thee, who could help loving Thee and confiding in Thee? Men humble the sinner, they defame him and stone him: Jesus Christ puts sin to flight, and destroys it as far as man will let Him; but He takes an interest in the sinner, raises him up, inspiring him with confidence, and restoring him to

life and happiness. Do we know how to value this difference? . . .

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us make, at His sacred feet, acts of adoration, confidence, and love, thanking Him for having caused us to experience the effects of His mercy so frequently. Let us beg of Him to make Himself known and loved by men. Let us ask Him for the grace to imitate His goodness, that so we may gain souls for His glory.

Resolutions.—To place all our confidence in Jesus. To be full of kindness for others.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—Heart of Jesus, throne of mercy, have pity on us.

Prayer.—Soul of Christ, etc., page 4.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CXI.

JESUS THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD.

'Again therefore Jesus spoke to them, saying, I am the Light of the world: He that followeth Me walketh not in darkness, but shall have the light of life.'—JOHN viii. 12.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—Again represent to yourself the Temple, Jesus seated therein, and the people listening to Him.

2*nd Prelude.*—Adorable Jesus, my Light and my Life, vouchsafe to penetrate my soul, dispel all its darkness and make Thy divine Light shine therein for ever.

1*st Point.*—Those who follow Jesus are enlightened by His Light.

'I am the Light of the world; he that followeth Me walketh not in darkness' (John viii. 12). It is from

Jesus we receive all gifts; this divine Sun of Justice, by rising on our earth, has dispelled the shadows of death, in which it was enveloped. His doctrine, His example, and His grace, have diffused, and still diffuse, a pure light in all souls well prepared. Oh, how desirable is this light of Jesus! The world does not know it, and this it is which constitutes its misfortune; the children of God know it; it leads them to salvation; but all do not possess it in the most perfect degree; it is only those who follow Jesus courageously, who are entirely free from the darkness of ignorance and the illusions of nature. O my Jesus! can I wish to be only half-enlightened? can I refuse to walk in Thy footsteps, in the holy paths of sincere humility, constant generosity, perfect charity, and of all the virtues of which Thou art the Master and the Model? Jesus, Thou art all things to me, and can I refuse to follow thee? Never permit it, O eternal Light! penetrate my soul with one of those celestial rays of light, which, discovering to me the greatness of such ingratitude, may prevent me from ever falling into it. No, I will not be guilty of this; I will follow Thee wheresoever Thou goest; but Thou knowest my weakness: help me, then, by Thy grace, and encourage me by the strength of Thy love.

2nd Point.—Those who shall have followed Jesus shall be introduced into heaven, the abode of light. 'He that followeth Me walketh not in darkness, but shall have the light of life' (John viii. 12). Where does Jesus lead those who follow Him? To the holy mount of Calvary; but from Calvary they pass on to heaven, the abode of life and light. It is there that, in the brightness of God Himself, we shall learn the value of the humiliations and sufferings which shall have rendered us like unto Jesus. It is then that we shall congratulate ourselves on having walked faithfully in the narrow road, since it will have brought us to unspeakable eternal happiness. . . . My divine Lord, why should I not think from this moment as I shall think then? Is not the hope of heaven well fitted to animate my

courage unceasingly, and to console me in all my trials? O good Jesus! inspire me with those holy desires of Heaven so pleasing to Thee, grant that I may ever have in my heart and on my lips that prayer of Thy holy Church: 'Oh! when shall Thy day begin, the day which shall know no end? When shall that holy and blessed country be given us which knows no enemies?' To gain it, we must follow Thee. I will follow Thee, then, let it cost me what it may. 'Draw me, and I will run after Thee, in the odour of Thy ointments' (Cant. i. 3).

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us adore Him as our Light and Guide in the way to heaven, and thank Him with all our heart for having enlightened us with His pure light; humbling ourselves for having profited so little from it. Let us beg of Him to draw us after Him, and to break for us all those ties which fasten us to the earth, and hinder us from running in the holy career of Christian virtue, according to the extent of the lights communicated to us for that end. Let us make Him all the promises which our heart shall suggest.

Resolution.—To follow Jesus by practising faithfully the virtue which His grace particularly demands of us.

Offering of the Resolution, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—'He that followeth Me walketh not in darkness.' (John viii. 12). 'Draw me, O Lord, and I will run after Thee, in the odour of Thy ointments' (Cant. i. 3).

Prayer.—Soul of Christ, etc., page 4.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CXII.

THOSE WHO BELONG TO JESUS OUGHT TO DESPISE THE WORLD.

'And He said to the Pharisees, You are from beneath, I am from above. You are of this world, I am not of this world.'—JOHN viii. 23.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude*, page 25.

2*nd Prelude.*—Jesus, my adorable Lord, Thou hast said that neither Thy kingdom nor Thy disciples were of this world; never, then, permit that I should be reckoned as belonging to the world which knows Thee not, and which Thou hast reprobated.

1*st Point.*—The true disciples of Jesus belong not to the world.

'You are from beneath, I am from above; you are of this world, I am not of this world' (John viii. 23). What is it to belong to the world? It is to esteem, and love, and seek after that which flatters the senses, pride and sensuality. It is to proclaim happy the rich, and those who are honoured and enjoy the comforts of life; youth, the time of pleasure and feasting; wisdom to revel in these. Such is the language of the world; ought it to be ours? Oh, no; true Christians know that all the glory and joys of this world pass away as quickly as the flowers of the fields, which wither and perish in a single day, and leave nothing behind them but bitterness and remorse. The disciples of Jesus, humbled, poor, and crucified, united interiorly to their Lord, esteem and love, for His sake, all that He has chosen and embraced, and have nothing but contempt for the pomps of a world, the object of His most awful anathemas . . . Are these sentiments mine? . . . O my Jesus, Who seest into the depth of my soul, and knowest my profound misery, Thou dost command me to place in Thee all my confidence, and to

ask from Thee those graces which I cannot possess of myself, namely, Thy Holy Spirit and Thy holy grace. I ask Thee for both, O Lord: teach me how I ought to demean myself in the midst of this perverse world, in order not to drink in its spirit; teach me, above all, to be a Christian in heart, since even solitude cannot help me if I nourish earthly inclinations in my soul.

2nd Point.—The true disciples of Jesus ought to expect persecutions from the world.

'You are from beneath, I am from above. You are of this world, I am not of this world' (John viii. 23). Jesus Christ was not of the world: the world ignored and persecuted Him. The same treatment is reserved for all His faithful disciples. 'If you had been of the world,' He said to His apostles, in the touching discourse made to them the night before He suffered, 'the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, therefore the world hateth you.' For the rest, He added: 'The servant is not greater than His Master. If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you' (John xv. 19, 20). I ought not then to be surprised if my fidelity to my duties draws on me raillery, or even something more; on the contrary, I ought to rejoice at this feature of resemblance with my divine Master, and I should even have reason to fear, if the world applauded me for not being sufficiently opposed to its perverse maxims. My divine Lord! what human fear should be able to hinder me from being faithful to Thee? The most corrupt among worldlings esteem virtue; perhaps, even, many of their number are only waiting for an example of fidelity and courage to return to Thee. The most wicked persecute virtue; but that persecution is honourable to Thy true servants, it enables them to share in Thy merits, and fastens them to Thy Cross. Hence I have decided, O Lord, never to be of the world, nor to pretend to be of it; I am Thy disciple; my happiness and glory shall be to show myself worthy of this glorious title.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us adore Him as our Master, and protest that we will belong to Him alone. Let us consecrate our heart to Him without reserve, begging Him to render its affections conformable to His spirit and to His holy will. Let us ask His pardon, if on some occasions we have yielded something to the world, His enemy; promising Him entire and constant fidelity in future.

Resolutions.—To despise human respect. To combat vigorously the fault which exposes us the most to partake of the spirit of the world.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—I belong not to the world, but to Jesus Christ.

Prayer.—Pater Noster.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CXIII.

THE LIBERTY OF THE CHILDREN OF GOD.

'Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed in Him, If you continue in My word, you shall be My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. Amen, amen, I say unto you, that whosoever committeth sin, is the servant of sin.'—JOHN viii. 31-34.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—Represent to yourself anew our Lord sitting in the Temple, and the crowd of people listening to Him.

2*nd Prelude.*—Jesus, my divine Redeemer, I beg of Thee to grant me grace to keep faithfully Thy holy word, that so I may receive from Thee true liberty.

1*st Point.*—We ought to labour to render ourselves worthy of enjoying the liberty of the children of God.

True liberty belongs to the children of God; it con-

sists in mastering the inclinations of nature, in raising ourselves above all human fear, and in walking cheerfully in the path of God's commandments; this holy liberty is infinitely glorious to the soul; it overwhelms it with joy, and gives it the assurance of its claims to the inheritance of its heavenly Father. It acquires this liberty by faithfully keeping to the words of Jesus; this fidelity supposes combats against the world, the wicked spirit, and nature; but how calculated are the advantages it procures us to support our courage! My Jesus, teach me to know these precious boons. Eternal Truth, Thou art He Who dost free Thy followers from the yoke of their passions, and from the tyranny of the prince of darkness. If, then, the votaries of the world are so jealous to preserve the false liberty which seduces them, ought I not to be infinitely more zealous and earnest in acquiring the holy liberty of Thy children? Thou hast said, O Lord: 'Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin' (John viii. 34). Preserve me from so sad a slavery: break all the chains which check me in my career, and grant that I may rejoice in the precious liberty which Thou hast gained for me by dying for me on the Cross.

2nd Point.—We ought to labour to procure for our neighbour the precious liberty of the children of God.

Ought it suffice to one who loves Jesus to enjoy His gifts in peace without taking an interest in the misfortune of those who are deprived of these gifts? No, without doubt, if we are worthy of our divine Master, we ought to be sorely afflicted at seeing so many souls pining in the chains of sin and in the slavery of the world. Alas! these souls are the objects of the love of Jesus; He has laid down His life for their ransom; He offers them liberty, and they refuse it, preferring to give themselves up to their bad passions rather than respond to His love. O my Saviour! how deplorable is this blindness! But it is not Thy will that I should limit my zeal to fruitless pity; it is Thy desire that my conduct should prove that

Thy yoke is sweet, and that in Thy service true happiness is to be found; it is Thy will that by my prayers I should appease Thy justice, and draw down graces of salvation upon others. O Lord, my happiness consists in working for Thy glory; help me, then, with Thy holy grace, and I will neglect nothing in order to win souls to Thy amiable yoke, that Thou mayest render them free, according to Thy holy promise.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us adore Him lovingly as our divine Liberator. Let us ask His pardon for the numberless faults which have exposed us to lose the precious liberty He purchased for us by His death. Let us renew all our promises of fidelity at His sacred feet, imploring His assistance. Let us pray to Him for those unhappy persons who groan under the slavery of the world and of their passions.

Resolutions.—To labour to overcome ourselves where it will cost us most, in order to acquire the holy liberty of the children of God. To pray for the conversion of sinners.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—Jesus, preserve me from the bondage of sin.

Prayer.—Soul of Christ, etc., page 4.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CXIV.

THE PROMISE OF JESUS TO THOSE WHO KEEP HIS WORD.

'He that is of God heareth the words of God . . . Amen, Amen, I say to you: If any man keep My word, he shall not see death for ever.'—JOHN viii. 47, 51.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude*, page 30.

2*nd Prelude.*—My divine Lord, grant me grace to relish Thy holy word and to keep it lovingly, that so I may attain eternal life.

1*st Point.*—As the children of God we ought to love His word.

'He that is of God heareth the words of God' (John viii. 47). The love of God's word is one of the best marks of the soul being in a good state, for, according to St. Augustine, in the same way as bread seems good to those alone who are in health, in like manner the word of God, always attractive in itself, can be relished by pure souls only, in whom charity dwells; corrupt souls are unworthy to relish, indeed, incapable of relishing the heavenly sweetness of this bread of angels; but the children of God take it in with delight, as pure milk and strengthening bread, which gives them life. What, then, ought not to be my respect for the sacred word of God? With what eagerness and love ought I not to listen to it, and above all, to put it in practice! Thy holy word, O my God, manifests to me Thy sacred Will; it contains Thy promises, the pledge of my eternal hopes; through it Thou dost reveal to me Thy adorable perfections and immense love for me. How, in consequence, can I refrain from loving it? Yes, Lord, I do love Thy holy word; I will guard it in the depth of my heart, after the example of the Prophet King, and I shall be preserved from sin. In my troubles it will be a sweet refreshment; if I am weak, it will sustain me in the

strength of Thy fear; it will be my consolation in this abode of my pilgrimage, and will conduct me to my heavenly country.

2nd Point.—We are certain of attaining salvation if we keep the word of God.

'If any man keep My word, he shall not see death for ever' (John viii. 51). We are sometimes uneasy regarding our salvation, we desire certainty about it; but we have an unerring warrant; it is God Himself Who speaks and says to us: 'If any man keep My word, he shall not see death for ever' (John viii. 51). Does all, then, depend on keeping His holy word? Yes, with the aid of His grace, which He has promised to prayer. Consequently I am sure of attaining eternal salvation, if I sincerely desire it. The fears by which the wicked spirit sometimes agitates my soul, the painful reflections he suggests to me on the uncertainty of my salvation, ought not, in consequence, to make any impression on me, since my Jesus, Who is Truth itself, has said that those who keep His word shall not die, but shall live eternally! Sweet certainty! Happy assurance! My God, may it penetrate even to the depths of my heart! Thy holy apostle exhorts us to rejoice in Thee! Ah! now I understand the reason why; it is because we are certain of possessing Thee for ever in our heavenly country, if we only persevere in Thy love. My resolution, therefore, is made, O Lord; I place all my hopes in Thy promises; give me Thy holy grace, and I will run in the way of Thy commandments, with a heart opened wide with confidence in Thee.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us thank Him lovingly for the promises He has deigned to make to those who keep His word. Let us ask Him for grace to relish and love His holy word, to keep it in our heart, and to make it the rule of our conduct. Let us pour out at His feet all the acts of faith, hope, and love our heart shall suggest; let us make Him promises for the future, and recommend to Him our wants.

Resolutions.—To perform our spiritual reading, meditation, etc., with attention, and with a desire of profit. To listen to instruction with the like dispositions. To beg, by frequent aspirations, for the love and right understanding of the word of God.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—'If any man keep My word, he shall not see death for ever' (John viii. 51). 'Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth' (1 Kings iii. 10).

Prayer.—Pater Noster.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CXV.

TRUE GLORY COMES FROM GOD.

'Jesus said to the Jews: If I glorify Myself, My glory is nothing. It is My Father that glorifieth Me, of Whom you say that He is your God.'—JOHN viii. 54.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude*, page 30.

2*nd Prelude.*—My divine Lord, I beg of Thee to preserve me from the poison of vainglory, and strengthen my soul in true humility.

1*st Point.*—After the example of our divine Lord, we ought never to glorify ourselves.

'If I glorify Myself, My glory is nothing' (John viii. 54). It is Jesus Christ, our adorable Master, Who speaks this language, and His sacred Mouth speaks from the abundance of His divine Heart. Yes, the Sacred Heart of Jesus is an abyss of humility; His divine life was one perpetual exercise of that virtue, by which He made amends for our pride and merited for us the grace to combat and to triumph over it. O Sacred Heart of my divine Saviour, when I consider Thee emptied out before the Majesty of

Thy Father, and submitting, for the love of me, to all kinds of humiliations and insults, how can I refuse to humble myself for Thy love? Thou hast become, according to the expression of Thy prophet, 'like unto a worm of the earth' (Ps. xxi. 7), which anyone may tread under foot with impunity. Thou dost appear 'like a leper struck by the hand of God and despised' (Is. liii. 4), and do I wish to exalt myself? Yea, Lord! Thou hast been reduced to the lowest state of degradation only because Thou hast taken upon Thee my sins, and shall I, who have committed them, dare to aspire to glory and honours? . . . No, my Jesus; I will not be guilty of such injustice; I acknowledge from my heart that humiliation ought to be my lot; if I glorify myself, my glory is absolutely nothing (John viii. 54), but lies and deceit. How hast Thou been able to bear with me, O Lord, when I have desired to exalt and glorify myself? Ah! it is because Thou lovest me as a Father and in God; Thou dost look with compassion on the infirmities of my soul; deign, then, to cure them, O sweetest and best of Fathers. I accept, for this end, all the bitterness of the painful remedies to be undergone.

2nd Point.—God takes care to glorify those who are solidly humble.

'If I glorify Myself, My glory is nothing; it is My Father that glorifieth Me' (John viii. 54). Our divine Lord has said: 'He that exalteth himself shall be humbled, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted' (Matt. xxiii. 12). The conduct of divine Providence verifies every day this oracle of its wisdom; honour follows humble persons, whilst the proud generally cause themselves to be despised; the glory of the former is worth nothing in the sight of men; but their heavenly Father takes care to glorify the humble, and their glory is solid and true. It is, then, true, O my God, that we can attain glory only by renouncing it, and it is the most absurd folly to wish to acquire it by the opposite means. Preserve

me always from so grave a mistake, and grant that I may ever seek after that true glory which is consummated in heaven. But what am I saying, O Lord? Ah! it is not from this motive that I wish to practise humility; it would be unworthy of one who has the happiness to belong to Thee; it is that I may increase in Thy love and become like unto Thee that I desire to humble myself before men; give me Thy holy grace, and tell me in the depths of my heart what Thou dost wish me to do in order to draw practical fruit from this meditation.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us adore Him as the God of glory, to whom all honour is due. Let us thank Him with all our heart for the love which has induced Him to become for us the Teacher and Model of humility. Let us beg of Him to fill us with His Spirit, and not to permit that His example should be useless to us. Let us abase ourselves for having been so wanting in humility, since our God has so humbled Himself for our sakes. Let us implore the Sacred Heart of Jesus to communicate to our hearts the sweet unction of His love that it may cause us to embrace with joy the practice of a virtue so contrary to our nature.

Resolutions.—To profit by every opportunity that may offer to-day of practising humility, generously sacrificing to Jesus all the revolts and repugnances of our self-love.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—'If I glorify Myself, My glory is nothing' (John viii. 54). Jesus, meek and humble of heart, make my heart like Thine.

Prayer.—Soul of Christ, etc., page 4.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

CONTEMPLATION CXVI.

JESUS CURES THE MAN BORN BLIND.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—'And Jesus passing by, saw a man who was blind from his birth. . . . He spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and spread the clay upon his eyes; and said to him: Go, wash in the pond of Siloe. . . . He went, therefore, and washed, and he came seeing' (John ix. 1, 6, 7).

2*nd Prelude.*—Represent to yourself one of the streets of Jerusalem, where the blind man was when Jesus saw him and cured him.

3*rd Prelude.*—Divine Jesus, I beg of Thee to increase my hope in Thee, as well as my obedience to Thy holy Will.

1*st Point.*—Consider the persons. The good and adorable Jesus, Who thinks of nothing but of doing good wherever He is. The apostles; they follow Him everywhere. Happy their lot! they have done well to abandon all they possessed to procure the boon for themselves. An afflicted man is to be seen in the middle of the street asking alms: he has been blind from his birth. What a blessing for him to be there when Jesus is passing along! But what do I say, my divine Lord? Thy Sacred Heart guides Thy steps, and Thou art there precisely to seek him, as Thou didst seek me when I was blind and forgot to have recourse to Thee.

2*nd Point.*—Listen to the words. 'Rabbi,' asked the disciples, 'who hath sinned, this man, or his parents, that he should be born blind? Jesus answered: Neither hath this man sinned nor his parents; but that the works of God should be made manifest in him' (John ix. 2, 3), I am about to cure him; he will believe in Me, will love

Me, and be saved. O divine Lord, it is thus Thou dost convert the evils of this life into so many efficacious means to lead us to heaven. 'I must work the works of Him that sent Me whilst it is day; the night cometh when no man can work' (John ix. 4). Jesus hastens to employ, in works of mercy, the time which He has yet to pass on the earth; ought I not to hasten to employ profitably my life, which is but as a day, after which I can no longer work out my salvation, or labour at that of my neighbour? 'As long as I am in the world,' Jesus says, 'I am the Light of the world' (John ix. 5). O Light eternal and uncreated! enlighten all hearts with Thy divine brightness!

3rd Point.—Consider the actions. Jesus, having spoken thus, moistened a little earth with His spittle, applied it to the eyes of the blind man, and said to him: 'Go, wash in the pool of Siloe' (John ix. 7). The man born blind obeys without reply, and his faith is rewarded. Divine Jesus, permit me to ask why Thou makest use of such a means? Thou tellest me in the depth of my heart that Thou wouldst exercise the faith and obedience of the man born blind. But again, why apply clay to his eyes? Ah, I understand why! To teach me that a profound sentiment of my own misery and nothingness is a balm sovereignly efficacious in the cure of all the miseries of my soul. The remedy is humiliating; self-love shrinks from it, but Thou dost will it, O Jesus, since it is only in humility that salvation is to be found. I accept, then, this remedy. Yes, I wish to know myself, and to see myself as I really am; but, far from being discouraged at the sight, I will hearken to Thy words, and will go and wash myself in Thy precious Blood. O Sacred Blood of my Jesus! Thou dost sanctify such as are impure, and dost purify ever more such as are already pure. O precious sight of my vices and defects, which leadest me to plunge myself into this salutary bath, be thou always before me, may the abyss of my miseries be cast into and swallowed up in

the abyss of the divine mercies, yea, even in the Sacred Heart of my adorable Jesus.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us render Him our homage of adoration and love. Let us thank Him for having deigned to compassionate our miseries and to offer us a remedy for them. Let us repeat fervently and frequently this prayer of St. Augustine: 'Lord, make me know Thee, and make me know myself.' Let us accept willingly the knowledge of ourselves and of our own miseries, in so far as God shall make these known to us. Let us produce several acts of confidence in God, imploring Him to penetrate us with sentiments which are at once so just, and which give Him so much glory.

Resolutions.—Not to be discouraged at the sight of our falls and defects, but ever to have recourse to Jesus Christ with entire confidence.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—Lord, grant that I may know Thee, and that I may know myself.

Prayer.—Soul of Christ, etc., page 4.

Examen of the Contemplation, page 4.

MEDITATION CXVII.

JESUS THE GOOD SHEPHERD.

'I am the Good Shepherd. The Good Shepherd giveth His life for His sheep. But the hireling, and He that is not the Shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and flieth . . . because he is a hireling, and he hath no care for the sheep. I am the Good Shepherd, and I know Mine and Mine know Me . . . and I lay down My life for My sheep.'—JOHN x. 11-15.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—Represent to yourself a public place in Jerusalem. Picture to yourself a crowd of people, among

whom are a great number of Pharisees. Jesus is addressing to all the word of life.

2nd Prelude.—Divine Jesus, adorable Shepherd, discover to me in this meditation how great is the love which Thou hast for Thy sheep, and grant me grace to respond to it with all the love of which my heart is capable.

1st Point.—Jesus is our good Shepherd; He has laid down His life for us.

'I am the good Shepherd. The good Shepherd giveth His life for His sheep' (John x. 11). We may lay down our life in two ways—by consecrating it entirely to the service and happiness of those we love, or by sacrificing it willingly for them. Jesus gave His life for us in both ways. Every instant, from His birth to His death, was nothing but a perpetual exercise of His infinite charity; if He suffered, it was to expiate our sins; if He laboured, it was to give us an example; if He preached, it was to instruct us; if He worked miracles, it was to strengthen and enliven our faith; if He practised the most heroic virtues, it was in order to merit for us the grace to practise them after His example. Yet His love for us was not even yet satisfied; He would add to so many proofs of it a new one, which, according to His own judgment, infinitely surpasses all the rest. 'Greater love than this no man hath,' says our divine Lord, 'that a man lay down his life for his friends' (John xv. 13). And this is precisely what He has done. This Good Shepherd loves His sheep; He has given Himself up to death for them, and to what a death! O excess of goodness! How can we refuse to give Him our heart? After having so greatly loved us, He only asks us in return for a little love; a little good-will to put to profit the graces which His life and death have acquired for us. Is this too much? Can we with a shadow of justice refuse Him what He expects from us?

2nd Point.—We are the sheep of Jesus; we ought to listen to His voice and be guided by it. 'My sheep hear My voice; and I know them, and they follow Me. And I

give them life everlasting, and they shall not perish for ever, and no man shall pluck them out of My hand' (John x. 27, 28). We have the happiness to be the sheep of Jesus; let us then hearken to His divine voice. It says to us: 'Take up My yoke upon you . . . for My yoke is sweet, and My burden light' (Matt. xi. 29, 30). Follow Me in the road I have traced out for you: 'Fear not, little flock' (Luke xii. 32); it is I Who call you. Could I lead you elsewhere than to happiness and life? Follow Me; I will conduct you to rich and fertile pastures; you shall be nourished with My Flesh and Blood; 'you shall draw water with joy out of the Saviour's fountains' (Is. xii. 3): pure water which flows forth to eternal life. Follow Me with confidence; 'My sheep shall not perish; no man shall pluck them out of My hand' (John x. 28). O my Jesus, my amiable Shepherd! may Thy sacred voice resound in the depth of my soul; may it arouse my languor and draw me so powerfully after Thee, that I may no longer be able to resist Thy guidance. O my Saviour and my Father, where do I go when I separate myself from Thee? I can find only death when I separate myself from the Fountain-head of life. Jesus! Thy adorable Heart calls me; long since has Thy love pursued me; and I, a wandering sheep, refuse to place myself under Thy loving laws. But resistance has an end; O my God, I can no longer resist Thee; I unite myself to Thee for ever. Thou hast said that nothing in this world shall ever be able to snatch Thy sheep from Thy hands; I place all my confidence in this divine promise; and with all my heart I hope that neither life nor death, nor persecutions, nor the sword, nor trials, nor the wickedness of men, nor all the fury of hell, shall ever separate me from Thy love.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us adore Him as the Good Shepherd, Whose sheep we are. Let us render Him lively acts of thanksgiving for all that He has vouchsafed to do in favour of His cherished flock. Let us ask pardon for the want of loyalty by which we have grieved His paternal

Heart. Let us beg of Him never to permit us in future to refuse to hearken to His voice when He calls us to follow Him by imitating His virtues.

Resolution.—To follow faithfully the inspirations of grace.

Offering of the Resolution, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—'The Lord ruleth me, and I shall want nothing' (Ps. xxii. 1). The sheep belonging to Jesus shall never perish; none shall be able to snatch them from His hands.

Prayer.—Receive, O Lord, my liberty without reserve; deign to accept my memory, my understanding, and my will. I have nothing, I possess nothing which is not the gift of Thy bounty. I give back all to Thee; I abandon all without reserve to Thy Will, that Thou mayest dispose of all as it shall please Thee. All that I ask of Thee is Thy grace and Thy love; with these I shall be rich enough, and beg for nothing more.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CXVIII.

THE VALUE OF SOLID AND HIDDEN VIRTUES.

'And the seventy-two disciples returned with joy, saying: Lord, the devils also are subject to us in Thy Name . . . And Jesus said to them: Rejoice not in this, that spirits are subject unto you; but rejoice in this, that your names are written in heaven.'—LUKE x. 17-20.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude.—Figure to yourself a vast plain, in which Jesus is surrounded by His disciples.

2nd Prelude.—Grant me grace, O Lord, to apply myself to the practice of solid virtues, which alone can ensure me the possession of heaven.

1st Point.—We ought to prefer hidden virtues to those which shine outwardly.

'Rejoice not in this, that spirits are subject unto you: but rejoice in this, that your names are written in heaven (Luke x. 20). It is common enough with persons unformed in spiritual life to allow themselves to be dazzled by the success of good works, and to look on the sanctity they admire in others as consisting in such success, and to judge of their own sanctity by the success of their own works. If we have fallen into this error, our adorable Lord desires to-day to disabuse us, teaching us to rejoice alone in the mansions which are prepared for us in heaven, and place our confidence only in such things as can ensure heaven to us. It is to the practice of such virtues as are humble and hidden that Jesus wishes me particularly to apply myself; it is His Will that without neglecting the practice of those exterior good works of which His Providence may give me opportunities, I nevertheless accustom myself in preference to the practice of humility, recollection, real and disinterested charity, and to the faithful fulfilment of the smallest duties; in a word, of every hidden virtue to which He did not hesitate to consecrate Himself during thirty years of His precious life. Few understand this language, for our Lord refuses to impart its meaning to the wise and prudent of this world, whilst He reveals the secret to the little and the humble. O my Saviour, grant me grace to become truly humble, that so I may be worthy to recognise the value of those virtues which the world contemns. Grant that I may not place my happiness in the esteem of creatures, and in the glory resulting from deeds of repute, but in the generous and persevering imitation of the example Thou didst give me at Nazareth. O school of humble souls! Paradise of the earth! give me to understand and relish the lessons Thou didst give to all who truly love Jesus.

2nd Point.—The value of interior virtues, and the manner of practising them.

Why is the practice of humble and hidden virtues so sure and direct a way to reach heaven? Precisely because

this is the way most opposed to the inclinations of corrupt nature. Pride caused our fall; only humility can raise us up, by drawing down the divine mercy on us; for this reason there is no virtue which our adorable Jesus has more earnestly taught us by His example and His lessons. What, then, is humility? It is a conviction that we are bound in justice to despise ourselves, and to be glad that others despise us, so that God alone be glorified. Happy the soul who has known how to discover this hidden treasure, this precious pearl. Humility, when true, establishes the soul in peace, inspires us with an unbounded confidence in the divine goodness, and draws down on us the sweetest and most abundant blessings from our Lord. O my Jesus, implant in my heart the love and desire of this inestimable treasure. Teach me how greatly Thy adorable Heart cherishes holy humility, and all the inestimable virtues which flow from this one as from their source. Sacred Heart of Jesus, my only sovereign good, grant that after Thy example my heart may love and embrace all that Thou hast loved and embraced. O my Saviour, Thou didst lower Thyself for me to the depths of nothingness; in exalting myself, I remove myself from Thee; but in humbling myself, I find Thee; I, then, will humble myself, that so I may find Thee and become one with Thee, never more to be separated from Thee.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us adore Him as our God, and render Him humble homage of gratitude and love, as our Saviour, our Master, and our Model. Let us open our heart to the sweet influences of His Heart, by peaceful recollection and fervent prayer. Let us beg of Him to discover to us the sweetness of that interior and hidden life of which He is our Model, and to which He calls all His true disciples. Let us accept, with generosity, all the means it shall be His holy Will to make use of in order to make us solidly humble and unassuming, imploring the help of His grace for this end, and promising Him to be faithful to the grace.

Resolutions.—To watch carefully to-day for every opportunity to practise humility. To animate all our actions with the motive of pleasing God and advancing in His love.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—O my God, teach me to comprehend the advantages of a hidden and interior life.

Prayer.—Soul of Christ, etc., page 4.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CXIX.

TRUE HAPPINESS CONSISTS IN POSSESSING JESUS.

'And, turning to His disciples, Jesus said: Blessed are the eyes which see the things that you see. For, I say to you, that many prophets and kings have desired to see the things that you see, and have not seen them; and to hear the things that you hear, and have not heard them.'—LUKE x. 23, 24.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude*, page 43.

2*nd Prelude.*—My adorable Lord, grant me grace to appreciate as greatly as I should the happiness of knowing Thee and of living under the law of grace, which Thou didst come to establish on earth.

1*st Point.*—We do not see Jesus Christ, but we possess Him in the Holy Eucharist.

'Blessed are the eyes which see the things that you see' (Luke x. 23). The apostles were blessed in being able to see Jesus, their divine Lord, to converse with Him, to live with this God made man, Who for four thousand years had been the desired of all nations, and the expectation of the just. But is our happiness less? Have we any reason to envy them? It is true we no longer behold Jesus Christ in His mortal flesh; our ears do not hear the sweet sounds of His voice; but He dwells night and day in the holy

Tabernacles, always ready to receive us, to listen to us, and to answer us in the depths of our heart. His presence, multiplied in an infinity of places, renders easy the means of enjoying His company as often as we may desire; and what crowns His favours, what His dearest friends never dreamed of hoping from Him, is that He deigns to give us Himself, to descend into the depth of our hearts and delights to fix His abode amongst us. Ah! if Jesus cannot say to us, as to His disciples: 'Blessed are the eyes which see the things which you see,' may He not address us in words yet more touching: 'Happy the hearts which receive what you receive, and blessed are the souls which possess what you possess'? O my adorable Saviour, never permit me to undervalue such priceless advantages; enliven my faith, and cause me to appreciate the extent of my privileges.

2nd Point.—In heaven we shall see Jesus, and the vision of Him will constitute our happiness.

'Blessed are the eyes which see the things that you see' (Luke x. 23). If it was so great a happiness for the apostles to contemplate the sacred humanity of Jesus Christ; if we ought to esteem ourselves happy in possessing Jesus under the Eucharistic veils; what will not be our joy when we shall see Him unveiled in all the splendour of His glory? This happiness is certain to be ours if only we will render ourselves worthy of it. Every Christian can say with Job: 'I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that with my eyes I shall see my God. This, my hope, is laid up in my bosom' (Job xi. 25, 27). In heaven we shall see Jesus! What beauty and amiability shall we not then discover in Him! All His divine perfections and adorable virtues will then be entirely made known to us; we shall understand all the secrets of His Sacred Heart; we shall be able to measure the height and breadth and depth of His immense charity, and our soul, inflamed with the purest and most ardent love, will be inebriated with the delights of the rapture of loving Him. O my divine

Jesus! then, indeed, shalt Thou be able to say to us: 'Blessed are the eyes which see the things that you see; blessed are the hearts which taste of your happiness; blessed are the souls who possess what you possess.' Grant, O Lord, that this happiness may one day be mine; inspire me with strength and courage to practise those virtues which will increase Thy love within me, and guide me, in the end, to the blessed abode where Thou art loved without measure and for all eternity.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us thank Him from our heart for having caused us to be born under the law of grace; for deigning to dwell in the midst of us in the adorable Sacrament, and for destining for us the happiness of contemplating Him eternally in heaven. If we be not deeply impressed with the greatness of these advantages, let us ask Him to increase our faith, and inflame us with His love. Let us produce several acts of the desire of heaven, and beg for all those graces which are necessary for us to arrive there.

Resolution.—To encourage ourselves in our moments of trial with the hope of seeing our divine Lord in heaven.

Offering of the Resolution, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—'I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that with my eyes I shall see my God' (Job xix. 25).

Prayer.—Soul of Christ, etc., page 4.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CXX.

THE YOKE OF JESUS CHRIST IS SWEET.

'Come to Me, all you that labour and are burdened, and I will refresh you. Take up My yoke upon you . . . for My yoke is sweet, and My burden light.'—MATT. xi. 28-30.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—Represent to yourself our Lord in the midst of a vast plain, surrounded by His disciples, sweetly calling those who desire to come to Him.

2*nd Prelude.*—Divine Jesus, be pleased to grant me grace to seek my consolation in Thee alone, and ever to carry Thy yoke cheerfully.

1*st Point.*—It is in Jesus that we find true consolation.

'Come to Me, all you that labour and are burdened, and I will refresh you' (Matt. xi. 28). Jesus is the most tender of friends; His divine Heart feels acutely our miseries; He calls us lovingly to come and pour out our souls in His holy presence, promising to apply a salutary balm to our miseries, and to flood our souls with His sweet consolation. Can we resist His paternal voice? Whatever trials we may have, He wishes to relieve them; if the weight of our sins overwhelm us, this tender Father is ever ready to receive and pardon His prodigal child. If temptations torment us, Jesus is the mighty Lord Who says to the tempest: 'Peace, be still' (Mark iv. 39), and the storm subsides. If we groan under the weight of our miseries, He is our infinitely good Saviour, Who said to the paralytic: 'Arise and walk' (Mark ii. 11), and to the leper: 'I will, be thou made clean' (Matt. viii. 3). If it be that the miseries of this life, our sad losses, or painful separations oppress us, Jesus is the compassionate Friend Who mingles His tears with those of Martha and Mary,

and gives them back him for whom they weep. O my Jesus, the most tender, the sweetest, and most loving of all consolers, where could I go elsewhere than to Thee to seek for comfort under my troubles? Human consolation is worth nothing to me, unless Thou deignest to contribute the unction of Thy grace. Draw me then to Thy sacred Feet, and from thence to Thy divine Heart; in that sacred asylum I shall unceasingly imbibe new strength to support in peace all the trials with which it shall please Thee to visit me in order to enable me to work out my salvation.

2nd Point.—In bearing the yoke of the Lord, we taste repose, and happiness, and peace. 'Take up My yoke upon you . . . My yoke is sweet, and My burden light' (Matt. xi. 30). It is our adorable Jesus Who addresses these words to us; the yoke which He presents to us is that of His holy love; could we refuse to bear it? It is sweet and easy to truly faithful souls! Such do not bear it alone, for if our good Jesus imposes it on them with one hand, He supports them with the other; and if they be weak, He deigns to permit them to rest on His Sacred Heart, there to regain courage. Amiable yoke of my sweet Saviour! Holy law which commands me to love my God with all my heart, with all my mind, with all my soul, with all my strength, and my neighbour as myself for His sake! Sacred engagements, which I contracted at baptism, to shun with horror the pomps of satan, and to follow my divine Lord in the practice of every virtue! What dost Thou offer me that is painful? What dost Thou offer me which ought not to appear winning in my eyes, and ought not even to merit my warmest affection? O my Jesus! I receive joyfully the yoke which in Thy love Thou dost impose on all who belong to Thee; I will carry it cheerfully all the days of my life, and will show to those who know Thee not, by the holy joy with which my fidelity shall be accompanied, that Thou art the best and gentlest of all Masters.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us offer Him our homage

of adoration and love, begging Him to make us experience more and more the sweetness of His yoke. Let us ask His pardon for the infidelities which have caused us to find it heavy by weakening in our hearts the unction of His grace. Let us accept anew the yoke from His divine hand, and promise Him to carry it to the end of our life; renewing for this end our baptismal promises.

Resolutions.—To fulfil our duties to-day with great fervour and holy joy. If we cannot excite these sentiments within us, to protest at least to our Lord, by frequent aspirations, that we are happy in His service, and desire to be faithful in all things unto Him.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—'Come to Me, all you that labour and are burdened, and I will refresh you' (Matt. xi. 29). 'My yoke is sweet, and My burden light' (Matt. xi. 30).

Prayer.—Receive, O Lord, etc., page 43.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CXXI.

JESUS THE TEACHER AND MODEL OF MEEKNESS AND HUMILITY.

'Learn of Me, because I am meek, and humble of heart: and you shall find rest to your souls.'—MATT. xi. 29.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude*, page 49.

2*nd Prelude.*—Adorable Jesus, grant me grace to become like unto Thy divine Heart, by the practice of meekness and humility.

1*st Point.*—It is from Jesus we are to learn to practise meekness and humility.

Meekness and humility are infinitely dear to the Sacred Heart of our divine Lord; if we know how to practise these virtues we are sure to please Him and draw down on ourselves His most precious favours. But how are we to acquire this science, which is above all sciences? Creatures are incapable of teaching it to us, and yet we cannot study it without a master. O my Jesus! Thou dost deign to be our Master; it is to the school of Thy divine Heart Thou dost call us; grant me, then, the grace to profit by Thy sacred lessons. When I meditate on Thy mysteries, teach me not to content myself with the exterior alone, but open to me Thy adorable Heart, and cause me to read in it the ardent love Thou hast for humiliations and injuries; grant that I may discover in it the divine source of that infinite meekness, which from Thy Sacred Heart diffuses itself throughout all Thy words and actions. When Thou dost present me with the opportunity of practising meekness and humility, after Thy example, open the ear of my heart to the language of Thine. O Sacred Heart of my Jesus, if Thou dost will that I should practise these virtues, it is in order to impart to me all the treasures of grace Thou hast acquired for me in being the first to practise them Thyself; it is in order to unite me to Thee, and initiate me in the sweet secrets of Thy love; give me, then, the strength I need to enter into Thy intentions, by labouring courageously to overcome myself, that I may profit by Thy divine lessons.

2nd Point.—True peace is only to be found in the practice of meekness and humility.

'Learn of Me, because I am meek, and humble of heart: and you shall find rest to your souls' (Matt. xi. 29). The acquisition of the virtues Jesus wishes us to learn of Him, demands painful efforts; but how well this good Master knows how to indemnify His own for all they do for Him! A holy repose, a delicious peace: such are the blessings He promises us, if we have sufficient generosity to turn His teaching to account. How worthy to be sought for is

this peace of our dear Lord! It is not like the peace the world gives; nothing can tear it from the hearts which possess it. O my Saviour! I should indeed be my own enemy, if through refusing to make Thee some sacrifices of my self-love, or to impose on myself some few restraints, I should fail to procure that peace for myself! Divine Jesus! Thy adorable Heart is the place of my rest, the sweet support of my weakness, the infinite treasure of all good; I can procure admittance into it only by practising meekness and humility. Ah! with all my heart I cherish these two virtues; I will, by Thy grace, acquire them, cost me what it may; grant me the aid of Thy holy grace, I beg this of Thee most earnestly, and hope for it from Thy goodness.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us thank Him for having deigned to open His Sacred Heart unto us, and for having given It to us as a model. Let us beg Him to make us docile to His divine instructions. Let us expose to Him all our miseries with entire confidence, begging Him to have pity on us, and to implant within us those holy dispositions we are incapable of acquiring by our own strength. Let us promise Him to neglect nothing in order to co-operate with His grace and to become truly meek and humble.

Resolution.—To bear willingly and to forgive from our heart the many little contradictions and injustices of which we may be the object.

Offering of the Resolution, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—'Learn of me, because I am meek, and humble of heart: and you shall find rest to your souls' (Matt. xi. 29).

Prayer.—Soul of Christ, etc., page 4.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CXXII.

THE GREAT PRECEPT OF CHARITY.

'And behold a certain lawyer stood up, tempting Him; and saying: Master, what must I do to possess eternal life? But Jesus said to him: What is written in the law? How readest thou? He answering, said: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind: and thy neighbour as thyself. And He said to him: Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live.'—LUKE x. 25-28.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—Represent to yourself a synagogue, and watch our Saviour with His disciples, and with the doctors of the law.

2*nd Prelude.*—Grant me grace, O my God, to love Thee as perfectly as I can, and to love my neighbour as myself for Thy sake.

1*st Point.*—We ought to love God with our whole heart.

'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, with thy whole soul, with all thy mind, and with all thy strength' (Luke x. 27). The entire being which God has given us ought to be consecrated to His holy love; this love is the end of our creation; it constitutes our merit during life, and it will be our recompense after death. Our heart is formed to be united to God, and our true happiness can alone be found in the union; if we seek for it elsewhere, we shall never find it. Oh, how noble and precious is this end! What can be greater, or more noble, and at the same time sweeter, than to love an object infinitely ravishing—a God? St. Augustine, penetrated with joy and love, exclaimed in a transport of admiration: 'What, O Lord! Dost Thou command me to love Thee? Would it not be an immense favour in itself that Thou

shouldst permit me to love Thee? Thou dost menace me with great misery if I love Thee not. Ah! Lord, is it not the greatest of all miseries not to love Thee? I will love Thee, Beauty ever ancient and ever new; Beauty infinitely lovable! Too late have I begun to love Thee; may I now love Thee as fully as I ought!' . . . O my God! I unite my sentiments with these of this great Saint; yes, I love Thee, God of my heart, and I desire ardently to love Thee still more; increase, then, Thy holy love within me, and give me grace to fulfil to its utmost extent the first and greatest of Thy commandments.

2nd Point.—We ought to love our neighbour as ourselves.

'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself' (Luke x. 27). This second part of the great precept of charity is united essentially to the first. I cannot love God without loving my neighbour. This duty, O my God, ought to be sweet to me to fulfil. Thou dost regard as done to Thyself whatever I do for others; it is Thyself I love in them, when I love them for Thy sake; and can it be difficult for me to love Thee? Thou art my Creator, my Benefactor, my Father; Thou art my God and my All. Ah! if it be painful to me, sometimes, to bear with the defects of others, to render them humbling services, to forgive willingly, and to be the first in forgiving when I have been offended by them, ought I not to consider myself too happy to have such opportunities of testifying my love for Thee? Divine Lord, Thou hast loved me even to sacrificing Thy life for me; and should my love for Thee be so weak as to be unable to triumph over some little difficulties! Never permit it, O Lord; grant that for Thy sake I may love my neighbour with so strong and generous a love that nothing may be able to weaken it, and that it may never give way under any trial.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us adore Him as the divine Legislator of the law of grace and love. Let us thank Him for having come on earth to confirm and

perfect the sweet precept of charity, asking Him for grace to fulfil it to its utmost extent. Let us humble ourselves for all the faults by which we may have transgressed it, begging the Sacred Heart of Jesus to enkindle within us the sacred fire He came to cast on earth.

Resolutions.—To bear the defects of others for the love of God. From the same motive to render them all the good offices in our power.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—Give me Thy grace and Thy love O my God; I ask for nothing more.

Prayer.—Receive, O Lord, etc., page 43.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CXXIII.

THE CHARACTER AND RECOMPENSE OF TRUE CHARITY.

'Jesus said to him: Thou hast answered right; this do, and thou shalt live.'—LUKE x. 28.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—Same as the preceding one, page 54.

2*nd Prelude.*—O my God, give me true and effective charity, that so I may deserve to possess the life of grace in this world and the life of glory in the world to come.

1*st Point.*—Our charity ought to be practical.

Do this.—The love which we owe to God and our neighbour must not consist in words alone, or in sentiments: it must bring forth deeds. Our love for our Lord must make us keep His commandments; accept willingly all the arrangements of His Providence; practise the virtues of our state; and strive more and more to be pleasing to Him. Our love for our neighbour must exclude all hatred

from our heart, all want of charity from our words, and all unkindness from our conduct: it must, on the contrary, lead us to esteem and love our neighbour; to render him any service; above all, to help to procure his eternal salvation. If we do these things our charity will be real, even though we may not experience any sensible feeling of tenderness towards God or others, and we shall deserve the recompenses of our Lord. If, on the contrary, we do not practise these acts of virtue, the warmest affections we may feel will only serve to deceive us, unless they lead us to change our conduct. O my God, how good Thou art to render possible to us at all times the practice of Thy holy love, by making it depend on our good will and good works! Ah! never permit me to be so unhappy as to neglect these efficacious means of giving Thee glory and pleasing Thee; grant that I may love Thee with a strong and generous love, which may enable me to remain constant, notwithstanding the many interior and exterior trials to which it may please Thee to subject me.

2nd Prelude.—If our charity be real, we shall have life in God.

'This do, and thou shalt live' (Luke x. 28). Of what life does our adorable Lord speak here? Of the life of grace of which He is the origin, and which consists of the union of our soul with Him. This divine Saviour has said: 'If any one love Me, he will keep My word, and My Father will love him, and we will come to him, and will make our abode with him' (John xiv. 23). If we have charity we shall even become the temples of God; the reign of the Holy Trinity will be established within us, and we shall live that interior life, hidden with Christ in God, of which the world knows nothing, not being worthy to know it. This life will become for us the source of all good; we shall enjoy light and peace; our soul will be replenished with strength and vigour to avoid evil and do good; and when at length the moment shall arrive, marked out by our Lord to call us to Himself, the life of

grace will become for us a life of glory, and will fix us for ever in the possession of our God. O my Jesus! what an infinite reward Thou dost promise to those who will but love Thee! God of goodness, the only worthy Object of my love, how can I refuse to give Thee my heart? . . . Ah! take full possession of it, and grant that my entire life may henceforth be a perpetual exercise of the purest charity.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us offer our homage of adoration and love to His divine Heart, begging Him to consume ours with its sacred flames, to lend His powerful help to our weakness in order to aid us in proving our love to Him by our deeds. Let us examine, by the light of His grace, what are those sacrifices which His love especially demands of us. Let us make practical resolutions, begging Him to bless them.

Resolutions.—To do all our actions with a view of pleasing God and advancing in His love. To practise charity towards others if any opportunity should offer.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—My God, Thou art All to me. 'This do, and thou shalt live' (Luke x. 28).

Prayer.—Receive, O Lord, etc., page 43.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CXXIV.

PARABLE OF THE GOOD SAMARITAN.

'But he, willing to justify himself, said to Jesus: And who is my neighbour? And Jesus, answering, said: A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho and fell among robbers, who also stripped him, and having wounded him went away, leaving him half dead.'—Luke x. 29, 30.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—Represent to yourself the roadside where

the unfortunate man is lying on the ground, stripped of his clothes, covered with wounds and blood, and just ready to expire.

2*nd Prelude.*—Grant me grace, O Jesus, to understand the profound signification of this parable, and penetrate me with the sentiments wherewith it ought to inspire me.

1*st Point.*—The condition of mankind before the Incarnation of the Son of God.

St. Augustine, explaining the meaning of the parable we are about to meditate, says that our Lord made use of it to figure to us the history of our fall and of our Redemption. Let us go through its details carefully. 'A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among robbers, who also stripped him, and having wounded him went away, leaving him half dead' (Luke x. 30). This traveller is ourselves; sin is the robber, who, not content with stripping us of our innocence and all its prerogatives, wounded us cruelly and rendered us an object hideous in the sight of God and of His angels; wounds which leaving us our natural life, deprived us of His grace. We were in consequence half dead, since we carried a dead soul within us in a living body. Reduced to so deplorable a state, we could receive no help from any creature. The Patriarchs, the Prophets, the entire Sacerdotal race, though chosen by God, were alike incapable of remedying our miseries; which is signified by the Priest and the Levite, who passed on without helping the wounded man. Let us go back in spirit to the period which preceded our Redemption, and let us suppose for a moment that God was not willing to work in our favour this wonder of His mercy; what would have become of us? The sad posterity of Adam, destined to a second death, had nothing to expect but the awful judgments of a just God. Why were we not abandoned to our fate? Did God behold in us anything that could excite His pity and induce Him to

pardon us? No; but He is mercy itself; He is infinite love, and on this account our Redemption has been purchased at the price of the Incarnation and Death of a God. O my Saviour, I owe everything to Thee; grant me then the grace to love Thee as greatly as I ought, and to prove to Thee my gratitude by the most persevering fidelity.

2nd Point.—The goodness of Jesus Christ in the mystery of our Redemption.

The Priest and the Levite having alike passed by without helping the unhappy man who was half dead on the road, a Samaritan, who also came that way, saw him and was moved with compassion. He approached him, poured oil and wine into his wounds, bound them up, placed him on his own horse, took him to an inn, and after having lavished every care on him, the next day he gave two pieces of silver to the host, engaging to repay him on his return whatever he should spend over and above that sum. This charitable Samaritan is the figure of our Lord; we were estranged from Him by sin; still worse, we were His enemies; yet His Sacred Heart was moved with pity and compassion at the sight of our misery; He did not disdain to descend from His throne of glory to come down and apply a healing balm, composed not of wine and oil, but of His own Sacred Blood. After having helped us Himself during His mortal life, He left the world to return to heaven, but far from abandoning us, He has confided us to the care of His Church. This holy Church received from Him, before His departure, two pieces of gold of infinite value, His holy Humanity and His Divinity; in other words, His adorable Body and His precious Blood in the Holy Eucharist, an inexhaustible treasure destined to provide for all our earthly wants. The parable adds, that the Samaritan promised to repay on his return whatever should be due for the care bestowed on the object of His persevering charity. Jesus has likewise promised to His Church that He will come back and repay her with usury

for all she will have done for us; this magnificent promise will be fulfilled on the great accounting day, when all will be consummated, and the glory of God Himself will become the just recompense for the care the holy Church shall have taken of all those confided by Jesus to her tender solicitude. Oh, how nobly is the goodness of our adorable Saviour portrayed in this touching parable! Let us try to understand its wondrous sweetness, and become penetrated with love for this divine Jesus, Who merits by so many titles to possess our whole heart.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us adore Him as a God full of pity and mercy, Who has debased Himself, taking on Him our nature in order to save us. Let us thank Him with the most profound and lively gratitude for having deigned to become man, shed His Blood, found His Church, and institute the most holy Sacrament of the Altar to ensure our happiness and satisfy His love for us; producing, if it be possible, some acts of the love so justly due to Him. Let us beg of Him to increase His love within us, and to give us grace to respond to so great benefits as thankfully as we possibly can.

Resolutions.—Often to think during the day of the benefits and infinite goodness of our adorable Saviour. To do all our actions through love and gratitude.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—'Jesus has loved me and delivered Himself for me' (Gal. ii. 20).

Prayer.—Soul of Christ, etc., page 4.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

CONTEMPLATION CXXV.

JESUS THE GUEST OF MARTHA AND MARY.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—'Now it came to pass as they went that He entered into a certain town; and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, who sitting also at the Lord's feet, heard His word. But Martha was busy about much serving. Who stood and said: Lord, hast Thou no care that my sister hath left me alone to serve? Speak to her, therefore, that she help me. And the Lord, answering, said to her: Martha, Martha, thou art careful, and art troubled about many things. But one thing is necessary. Mary hath chosen the best part, which shall not be taken away from her' (Luke x. 38, seq.).

2*nd Prelude.*—Image to yourself the interior of the house inhabited by Lazarus and his sisters.

3*rd Prelude.*—My divine Master, grant me grace to learn how to converse with Thee, and to do all my actions in Thy holy presence.

1*st Point.*—Behold the persons. First our divine Lord. Consider His sweetness and gentleness; the amiable dignity of His bearing; His countenance, His movements, and that air of trusty loving-kindness by which He makes known to His hosts that He is pleased with their watchful attentions. . . Let us also behold that happy Mary seated at His feet: with what earnestness she listens to His sacred words! . . . Her exterior manifests her love and respect. . . . O my Saviour! would that I were in her place! Of what dost Thou speak to her? . . . Doubtless of the virtues of which Thou art the Teacher and the Model, of the secrets of the interior life, of the nothingness of all earthly things, of the value of those of heaven. . . . Ah, Lord, permit me also to listen to Thy divine lessons! . . .

Martha is full of business; she exerts herself, and leaves nothing undone to entertain worthily her divine Lord and Master.

2nd and 3rd Points.—Listen to the words and consider the actions. Let us hearken to the sweet communications of Jesus with Mary. Oh, if our divine Lord would condescend to speak also to us! 'Lord, Thy servant heareth' (1 Kings iii. 10). Wilt Thou not speak to my heart? Ah! tell me that Thou art my God and my sovereign good, that my happiness consists in loving Thee, in being faithful to Thee, in sacrificing for Thy sake all that may be an obstacle to Thy reign within me. . . Jesus speaks, Mary listens . . . Martha draws near. 'Lord,' she exclaims, 'hast Thou no care that my sister hath left me alone to serve? Speak to her that she help me' (Luke x. 40). Our divine Lord, who beholds kindly the trouble she is taking for Him, but who wishes to give her, as well as us, a great lesson, says to her: 'Martha, Martha, thou art careful, and art troubled about many things. But one thing is necessary. Mary hath chosen the best part, which shall not be taken away from her' (Luke x. 41, 42). The trouble that you take is praiseworthy, but eagerness and anxiety do you harm; for the rest, one thing alone is necessary, that is, to save your soul. Mary is carefully occupied therewith in listening to My words, for which reason I pronounce her to have made a good choice, and the happy lot which she has chosen shall never be taken from her.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us unite our loving and respectful homage to those of the holy family in Bethania. Let us beg for grace to imitate the zeal of Martha and the love of Mary, by being careful to do all we can for our Lord; above all, to be attentive to pray well. Let us humble ourselves for the little care we have taken to entertain Him as we ought to have done after receiving Him in Holy Communion. Let us beg of Him to teach us to live habitually in His holy presence, to

converse with Him interiorly, and to please Him in all things.

Resolutions.—To practise recollection to-day, and to do our actions in the presence of Jesus.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—'Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth' (1 Kings iii. 10). 'One thing is necessary' (Luke x. 42).

Prayer.—Soul of Christ, etc., page 4.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CXXVI.

ON RECOLLECTION.

'Mary hath chosen the best part, which shall not be taken away from her.'—LUKE x. 42.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—Represent to yourself again the interior of the house of Bethania.

2*nd Prelude.*—Grant me grace, divine Jesus, to esteem recollection of spirit as greatly as I ought, to desire it, and to labour seriously to acquire it.

1*st Point.*—Marks of an interior soul.

What is that better part on which our Lord congratulates Mary? It is the recollection of mind which causes her to listen to her divine Lord lovingly; which makes her find so many charms in His sweet communications; and which inspires her with a holy ardour to practise the virtues He teaches her. This better part may also be mine; but above all things, I must well understand in what recollection of mind really consists. It is that interior disposition of a soul, which, belonging entirely to God, seeks the truth

with simplicity, desires it sincerely, and when it has found it, follows its guidance with vigour and generosity. The interior spirit is a pure and abiding intention, which gives life and merit to all our actions. It is a spirit of a lively faith, which manifests itself in all the occurrences of life; of a confidence in God, which perseveres, notwithstanding all sorts of tribulations; of a strong love, which surmounts every obstacle. Divine Jesus, Thou knowest how necessary is this spirit to me, and how much I stand in need of it; help me, then, with Thy holy grace. I promise Thee on my side to make every effort in my power to acquire it.

2nd Point.—The means to acquire the interior spirit.

The enemy of our salvation, who knows how agreeable to God and advantageous to our souls the interior spirit is, fails not to lay snares for us as soon as he perceives we are labouring seriously to acquire it; but if our good-will is sincere and constant, every obstacle which his malice may throw in our way will increase the success of our endeavours; nothing, nothing can prevent us from succeeding in so laudable an undertaking. Our Lord Himself assures us of this when He says that Mary has chosen the better part, which shall never be taken from her. What, then, is requisite to acquire the interior spirit? To mortify the spirit of giddiness and curiosity, to pray much, above all, by frequent aspirations towards God, and an habitual desire of being pleasing in His sight; to despise ourselves, to trust in God, to live in peace, and to be in all things faithful to the inspirations of grace. O my Jesus, grant that I may make use of these efficacious means; support my weakness; help my feeble will, and vouchsafe to draw me by the force of Thy love into that interior path wherein all those walk who are truly Thine.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us adore Him and produce at His feet several acts of His love, thanking Him for offering us the precious gift of the interior spirit. Let us pray to Him to excite within us an earnest desire to possess

this spirit, exposing to Him with humility and confidence the obstacles which prevent us from acquiring it, asking Him for grace to overcome them. Let us make practical resolutions.

Resolutions.—To practise recollection. To make to God to-day some sacrifices of curiosity or self-indulgence.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—I will hearken to the voice of the Lord in the depth of my heart (Ps. lxxxiv. 9). 'The kingdom of God is within you' (Luke xvii. 21).

Prayer.—Soul of Christ, etc., page 4.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CXXVII.

JESUS HAS BROUGHT DOWN THE FIRE OF DIVINE LOVE UPON THE EARTH.

'I am come to cast fire on the earth; and what will I but that it be kindled?'—Luke xii. 49.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—Represent to yourself our Lord preaching in a public place in Jerusalem.

2*nd Prelude.*—Divine Jesus, I pray Thee to enkindle within me Thy holy love, and grant me grace to communicate it to others.

1*st Point.*—Jesus ardently desires to enkindle within us the fire of His love.

'I am come to cast fire on the earth, and what will I but that it be kindled?' (Luke xii. 49). Jesus loves us, and He wishes to be loved by us. It was to gain our hearts that He left the throne of His glory, appeared in the midst of us as the most amiable of the sons of men, laid down His life for us, and has given Himself to us

under the Eucharistic veils. To make it in some sort impossible for us to refuse Him our love, He has deigned in these latter days to manifest unto us the treasures of His adorable Heart, inviting us to make this divine Heart the object of our worship, and promising the most precious graces to all His true adorers. The Sacred Heart of our divine Lord is a burning furnace; He desires to communicate Its flames unto us; He opens It to receive us, and invites us with the tenderness of a Father and Saviour to give up to Him our soul, that so penetrating it with His love He may purify it, renew it, influence it, enrich it with all His treasures, and possess it to the extent of His love. O my Jesus! it is then true that Thou dost love me, and dost desire that I should love Thee. . . . Ah! cause me to understand that I can be happy only in loving Thee. Thou knowest, O Lord, the many obstacles which hinder Thy holy love from reigning within me; destroy them by Thy grace and unite my heart to Thine. Love of my Jesus, Sacred fire which burns without ceasing, and is never extinguished, enlighten my mind, inflame my will, and make my entire life become a perpetual exercise of every virtue consecrated and vivified by love.

2nd Point.—We often hinder Jesus from enkindling within us the fire of His love.

'I am come to cast fire on the earth, and what will I but that it be kindled?' (Luke xii. 49). Jesus desires to communicate to us the ardours of His divine love, but too often we will not respond to the advances of His tenderness. He comes to us in Holy Communion, and places Himself as a seal upon our heart; but this heart, as hard as frozen wax, is incapable of receiving His impress. From the enclosure of the sacred Tabernacles, this divine Sun of Justice darts His rays upon our souls; but some obstacle prevents His sweet light and vivifying heat from penetrating them. The Sacred Heart of Jesus invites us to return Him love for love, but we do not hearken to His voice. Whence comes so much resistance and ingratitude,

O my Jesus? Help me to sound the depths of my soul. Is it from want of recollection or from tepidity in Thy service? . . . Or from want of generosity? . . . From love for the world and its pleasures? . . . Am I blind to my defects through a secret self-love? . . . O my God, speak to my heart; I desire to be enlightened on the state of my soul, in order to labour courageously to destroy all the obstacles which hinder me from loving Thee as earnestly as I ought.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us beg of Him to inflame our heart with the sacred fire He brought on earth. Let us ask His pardon with sincere regret for having had, up to the present, so little fervour to advance in His love. Let us implore His help to destroy within us the obstacles to the divine communications of His adorable Heart. Let us ask Him to cause His love to increase in the hearts of all mankind.

Resolution.—To labour seriously to destroy the defect within us which most opposes the reign of His divine love.

Offering of the Resolution, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—'I am come to cast fire on the earth, and what will I but that it be kindled?' (Luke xii. 49).

Prayer.—Receive, O Lord, etc., page 43.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CXXVIII.

THE LOVE AND DESIRE OF SUFFERINGS.

'I have a baptism wherewith I am to be baptized; and how am I straitened until it be accomplished?'—LUKE xii. 50.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude*, page 66.

2*nd Prelude.*—Grant me grace, O Lord, to accept with

submission and love all the trials by which Thy divine Providence has decreed to purify my soul.

1st Point.—It is for the love of us that Jesus desires to suffer.

'I have a baptism wherewith I am to be baptized; and how am I straitened until it be accomplished?' (Luke xii. 50). Jesus speaks here of His Passion; He calls it a baptism, because His precious Blood is to be shed so copiously, as entirely to cover His Sacred Body. But why does He testify so much impatience to suffer? His Sacred Heart must teach us this. The love with which He was consumed for us made Him long ardently for the time to come when He was to save us from eternal death. It was to cost Him His life, but He heeded that not, since He yearned for our salvation. Ah! if such are the dispositions of His adorable Heart towards us, is it not just that we should have for Him the most ardent love as well as the most lively gratitude and entire confidence? My sweet Saviour, how is it that I cannot discover these sentiments within my heart? It is because I do not know Thee sufficiently. Discover Thyself unto me then, O Jesus, Thou Delight of the Saints; grant that I may know Thee, O Beauty infinitely amiable, and may Thy divine love triumph in the end over my long-standing apathy.

2nd Point.—We ought to accept of the sufferings Jesus sends us for His love.

'I have a baptism wherewith I am to be baptized; and how am I straitened until it be accomplished?' (Luke xii. 50). Jesus died for us in the midst of torments; but if we desire that the fruits of His Sacrifice be fully applied to us, we must also suffer something on our part. We have evil inclinations to combat, and difficulties to surmount; we ought to be in readiness for inconveniences, sufferings, and pains of all kinds: such being the lot in this life of the unhappy children of Adam. Let us endeavour, then, in order to suffer with more merit, to unite our sentiments with those of the Sacred Heart of our

divine Lord, repeating after Him: I have a laborious baptism wherewith I ought to be baptized. Yes, my God, I believe it; I must suffer in this life, if I desire to possess eternal happiness in the next; I will suffer, then, willingly and with joy; I accept cheerfully all the crosses Thy adorable Providence sends me now or may send me in future. My Jesus, Thou hast loved me even to dying for me; in return I desire to love Thee, sufficiently at least to receive with cheerfulness the share Thou dost offer me of the bitterness of Thy chalice.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us thank Him for having deigned to love us so intensely as to take upon Him so many sufferings for our sake. Let us ask Him for grace to love Him in return, and to suffer, for His sake, all the trials He may please to visit us with. Let us humble ourselves at finding we are so destitute of generosity and courage; praying our divine Lord to grant us those powerful graces which are so necessary for us to aid us in overcoming the repugnances of nature, and to help us to bear our cross cheerfully.

Resolution.—To suffer with courage and love whatever trials divine Providence may send us to bear to-day.

Offering of the Resolution, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—'Love is strong as death' (Cant. viii. 6).

Prayer.—Receive, O Lord, etc., page 43. ℣

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CXXIX.

PARABLE OF THE BARREN FIG-TREE.

'Jesus spoke also this parable: A certain man had a fig-tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it, and found none. And he said to the dresser of the vineyard: Behold, for these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig-tree, and I find none. Cut it down, therefore; why cumbereth it the ground?'—LUKE xiii. 6, 7.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—As before, page 66.

2*nd Prelude.*—Preserve me, O Lord, from the dreadful chastisements reserved for the negligent who labour not to bring forth the fruits of justice.

1*st Point.*—It is the wish of God that we strive earnestly to produce the fruits of salvation.

'A certain man had a fig-tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it, and found none' (Luke xiii. 6). Each one of us represents the fig-tree planted in our Lord's vineyard, that is to say, in His Church; all graces are lavished on us from within it; God Himself cultivates us with extreme care, but He expects from us the fruits of sanctity. Could I offer Him much were He to come at this moment to demand of me an account of all that He has done for me up to the present? The barren tree ought not to cumber the earth; it deserves to be cut down. Is not such a threat well calculated to arouse my soul from its tepidity and self-love? . . . O my God, Thou dost place before me the severity of Thy judgments, only that I may labour to deserve Thy favour; Thou wouldst penetrate my soul with a salutary fear while I have still time to practise the virtues of which I must one day render Thee an account; replenish me, then, with Thy fear, which is a gift of Thy Holy Spirit, with that fear which produces peace by causing virtue to be practised. O Lord, Thou dost expect from me the fruits of piety,

charity, humility, meekness, patience and zeal. I will use my best endeavour to produce them, placing all my confidence in Thee, for Thou canst never abandon those who have a good will.

2nd Point.—God wishes us to pray for the conversion of sinners.

'But he answering said to him: Lord, let it alone this year also, until I dig about it and dung it' (Luke xiii. 8). It is only with regret that God consents to abandon souls; when protracted infidelity to His grace renders them unworthy of His goodness, He desires that His faithful servants intercede for them, and labour zealously to overcome their obduracy. Consequently, it is entering into His designs to pray for the conversion of sinners; besides, this office of charity is the best means of rendering God propitious to us, for He assures us Himself that in causing a sinner to turn from his evil ways we save our own soul from perdition, and cover the multitude of our sins. O my God, how good Thou art! and how greatly Thy love for Thy creatures manifests itself in all Thy words and actions! How can I remain any longer unfaithful to the advances of Thy holy grace? How can I refuse to apply myself in earnest to all that may secure my own salvation and that of others? O my God, it is Thy wish that we attain eternal life. Ah, even if our own interest were not concerned, love and gratitude towards Thee ought to compel us to strive to save our souls. Help me then, O Lord, and I will serve Thee with such fervour in future that nothing shall be able to destroy or weaken it.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us thank Him for the salutary warnings which He gives us. Let us beg of Him to arouse us from our sluggishness and inspire us with fervour. Let us pray very earnestly for sinners. Let us make Him all the promises and petitions our heart shall suggest.

Resolution.—To produce to-day several acts of the virtue in which we are most deficient.

Offering of the Resolution, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—'I desire not the death of a sinner but that the wicked turn from his way and live' (Ezek. xxxiii. 11).

Prayer.—Pater Noster.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CXXX.

WE OUGHT TO ENSURE OUR SALVATION BY OUR GOOD WORKS.

'A certain man said to Jesus: Lord, are they few that are saved? And He said to them: Strive to enter by the narrow gate.'—LUKE xiii. 23, 24.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude*, page 66.

2*nd Prelude.*—Grant me grace, O Lord, to despise all vain curiosity, and to secure my eternal salvation by the practice of solid virtue.

1*st Point.*—It is better to labour to merit heaven than to dive into the secrets of Providence. 'A certain man said to Him: Lord, are they few that are saved? And He said to them: Strive to enter by the narrow gate' (Luke xiii. 23, 24). Jesus, by this indirect answer, wishes to give us an important lesson. We sometimes weary ourselves by reasoning on the mystery of predestination, the small number of the elect, and other similar questions; this is pure loss of time, and we should do much better to employ ourselves in securing our eternal salvation than in desiring to dive into the impenetrable secrets of the Lord. We know by faith that our divine Lord has died for all mankind, that He wills the salvation of all, that He offers to all the graces necessary to reach heaven. This should be sufficient for us. Curiosity is useless; the

practice of virtue it is which will save us. O my Saviour! give me constancy and generosity; teach me to give all my care to being faithful to Thee; teach me to love Thee and to please Thee, without disturbing myself regarding those secrets the knowledge of which Thou hast reserved to Thyself. My salvation is in Thy hands; it is safer there than in my own. Thou art the Supreme Wisdom, Infinite Goodness, and Unlimited Power, and it is not possible Thou shouldst allow those to perish who love and serve Thee; I love Thee, O my God, and I desire to serve Thee, let this be my only science and perfect security.

2nd Point.—In order to merit heaven, we must labour with courage and generosity.

'Strive to enter by the narrow gate' (Luke xiii. 24). Our Lord, by these words, reminds us that salvation is a serious work, which demands courage. Let us renew our ardour for so noble an undertaking. We are invited to enter into the kingdom of eternal happiness by the narrow gate; let us, then, put away all idle cowardice, and understand that the more we examine into difficulties the more we fear them, and the more we fear them, the less capable we become to vanquish them. Generosity in the service of God draws down on our souls abundant graces, which render easy to us the things most opposed to our humours and inclinations; the cowardly stumble where great souls gain a complete victory. Ah! my Saviour, never suffer me to be overcome by timidity or foolish fears. I wish to strive in earnest to enter by the narrow gate; help, O Lord, my weakness, and strengthen my good resolution. Thy great apostle has said: 'Of myself I am nothing; but I can do all things in Him that strengthens me' (Phil. iv. 13). I ought to say the same thing, since Thou dost offer me the same help; fill my soul with courage and confidence, and I shall run with ardour in the road to heaven, no matter how narrow or difficult it may be.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us adore His profound wisdom which conceals from us those things we ought not

to know, and let us try to profit by everything which instructs us in practical truths. Let us ask pardon if our conscience reproaches us with having lost time in researches of curiosity, instead of employing it in the practice of virtue. Let us pray for a generous courage, and firm determination to advance with giant strides in the path to heaven, and petition for that perseverance in good which alone can secure salvation.

Resolution.—To labour generously to overcome ourselves in that which costs us the most.

Offering of the Resolution, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—'I can do all things in Him that strengtheneth me' (Phil. iv. 13).

Prayer.—Receive, O Lord, etc., page 43.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CXXXI.

LESSON ON HUMILITY.

'And it came to pass when Jesus went into the house of one of the chief of the Pharisees to eat bread, that they watched Him . . . And He spoke a parable to them that were invited, marking how they chose the first seats at the table, saying to them: When thou art invited to a wedding, sit not down in the first place, lest perhaps one more honourable than thou be invited. And he that invited thee and him come and say to thee: Give this man place . . . But when thou art invited, go, sit down in the lowest place, that when he who invited thee cometh, he may say to thee: Friend, go up higher. Then shalt thou have glory before them that sit at table with thee. Because every one that exalteth himself shall be humbled, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.'—LUKE xiv. 1, 7, 11.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—Represent to yourself the house of the Pharisee, and behold Jesus there at table with a number of guests.

2nd Prelude.—Grant me grace, O Lord, to become truly humble, that so my piety may be pleasing and edifying to my neighbour.

1st Point.—True humility is so amiable that it causes itself to be loved and esteemed even by worldlings.

'When thou art invited, go, sit down in the lowest place' (Luke xiv. 10). Humility, the practice of which our divine Lord here teaches us, is so amiable, that even the world, depraved as it is, cannot refuse to esteem it; it imitates it in its customs, doing from politeness what the servants of God do through virtue. A truly humble person does honour to piety; one who is not humble never gives edification, though his conduct may be otherwise irreproachable. If I wish to procure the glory of Jesus, and gain souls for Him, I must apply myself to acquire humility. Oh! how amiable will this virtue appear to me, if I contemplate it in my adorable Model! Christian humility is sweet and condescending, without being ostentatious or exacting, always ready to yield to others, showing a willingness and readiness for all that is not opposed to the law of God. O precious virtue, virtue so dear to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary and of all who wish to walk in their steps, how can I refuse to love Thee? My divine Lord, grant me grace to portray in my conduct the humility and meekness of Thy Sacred Heart, and by so doing, to prove to those who know not Thy sacred religion, how unjust are their prejudices against Thy true servants.

2nd Point.—Humility, to be true, must have its foundation in the heart.

We understand how precious humility is, and we desire to acquire it. Let us then pray to our Lord to enlighten us with His grace, as to the means we ought to take for this end. True humility should spring from the innermost soul; our adorable Master does not say: Learn of Me to practise exterior meekness and humility; but 'Learn of Me, because I am meek and humble of heart' (Matt. xi. 29).

It is from the abundance of the heart that kind words and virtuous actions spring; if our heart be humble, our conduct will in all things bear the impress of humility. Now, what must we do to acquire humility of heart? We must constantly study it in the Sacred Heart of Jesus, we must pray much, we must overcome ourselves courageously whenever self-love makes itself felt; we must refer faithfully to God all glory and praise. O my divine Saviour, make known to me the heavenly sweetnesses with which Thou dost overwhelm hearts truly humble, or which strive to become so! Thou dost exalt them not only in the eyes of men, but still more in the presence of Thy angels and of all the heavenly court, through the precious gifts and divine communications with which Thou dost delight to favour them. Help me then with Thy holy grace, draw me with the charms of Thy love, and I will run after the heavenly odours of meekness and humility exhaled from Thy divine Heart.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us return Him our homage of adoration and love, thanking Him for the precious lessons which He gives us. Let us humble ourselves for having up to the present so little understood them and so badly practised them. Let us ask Him for all the graces which are necessary for us in order to become humble, begging Him above all to teach us to practise humility through love for His divine Heart.

Resolution.—To put to profit all the opportunities which shall offer themselves to-day of practising humility.

Offering of the Resolution, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—'He that humbleth himself shall be exalted' (Luke xiv. 11). 'God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble' (Jas. iv. 6).

Prayer.—Soul of Christ, etc., page 4.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CXXXII.

PARABLE OF THE MARRIAGE SUPPER.

'And Jesus said to him: A certain man made a great supper, and invited many. And he sent his servant at the hour of supper to say to them that were invited, that they should come, for now all things are ready. And they began all at once to make excuse . . . Then the master of the house, being angry, said to his servant: Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor and the feeble, and the blind and the lame . . . Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled. But I say unto you, that none of those men that were invited shall taste of my supper.'—LUKE xiv. 16, seq.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude*, the same, page 75.

2*nd Prelude.*—Grant, O Lord, that I may correspond faithfully to Thy grace and merit to attain eternal happiness.

1*st Point.*—The misery of those who do not respond to the call of the Lord.

'A certain man made a great supper and invited many' (Luke xiv. 16). This banquet, prepared for us, is heavenly happiness: all are invited to it; but a great number refuse to attend the feast. Let us consider how blind those are who thus resist the advances of the goodness of God; some have no energy or eagerness except to acquire or preserve a fortune; others give themselves up unreservedly to the fascination of pleasure; others, again, pursue honours, or allow themselves to be overcome by cowardice, and to languish in indifference; all alike forget their salvation. Yet death draws ever nigh; soon it strikes them, and they are for ever excluded from the eternal happiness which our Lord offered to them. O my God! preserve me ever from the misfortune of imitating them! Thy grace has maintained in me, up to the present, the desire of heavenly things; my soul is not weighed down

by those bad passions which blind and render callous; yet, I know that great evils arise out of slight beginnings, and I cannot answer for my soul being exempt from those baneful inclinations which may drag me on even to that extent, if I do not repress them. Enlighten me as to my state, O Lord; show me all the defects Thou dost wish me to combat, and give me strength to overcome them, that so my heart may continue pure, and that I may never forget that I am called to enjoy Thee in heaven.

2nd Point.—The earnest desire of our Lord to communicate His gifts to us.

'Then the Master of the house, being angry, said to His servant: Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor and the feeble, and the blind and the lame. . . Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled' (Luke xiv. 21-23). Our resistance to grace does not hinder the accomplishment of our Lord's designs; if we reject His benefits He will know how to choose out more faithful souls who will indemnify Him for our ingratitude, to whom He will give the places in heaven He destined for us. Ah! never permit me, O Lord, to neglect any longer to put to profit Thy grace. Thou placest before me these awful truths only in order to excite me to attach myself to Thee more strongly; may I ever enter into Thy designs, and grant that all things may contribute to make me advance in Thy holy love. Thou dost add to these terrible truths such as are most consoling, for Thou dost teach us that Thy table is prepared for the poor and the feeble, the blind and the lame; that is to say, for souls that are infirm, weak, and imperfect. I ought, in consequence, to have confidence. O infinite goodness, make Thyself fully known unto me; teach me to distrust myself and to trust in Thee, and I shall possess the science of salvation and deserve to be admitted, after this life, to a participation of Thy eternal banquet.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us render Him our homage

of adoration and love, thanking Him for the salutary instructions which He gives us. Let us ask His forgiveness for our resistance to grace, and beg of Him to bestow on us, notwithstanding our past ingratitude, all the help which we stand in need of to enter heaven.

Resolution.—To follow faithfully the inspirations of grace.

Offering of the Resolution, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—Never permit, O my God, that my heart should be deaf to Thy voice.

Prayer.—Soul of Christ, etc., page 4.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CXXXIII.

PARABLE OF THE UNJUST STEWARD.

'There was a certain man who had a steward: and the same was accused unto him, that he had wasted his goods.'—LUKE xvi. 1.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—Imagine a public place in Jerusalem where our Lord is surrounded by a multitude of people, whom He is instructing.

2*nd Prelude.*—Grant me grace, O Lord, to prepare carefully for the account Thou wilt one day demand of me of all Thy gifts and graces.

1*st Point.*—God is our Master; He will one day demand of us an account of all the graces He has bestowed upon us.

'There was a certain man who had a steward: and the same was accused unto him, that he had wasted his goods' (Luke xvi. 1). This man, so unjustly deceived, summons before him the servant who has abused his confidence; he signifies his displeasure, and threatens him. 'How is it that I hear this of thee? . . . Now thou canst

be steward no longer' (Luke xvi. 2). What a blow for this man, who never thought of rendering an account to his master! He has looked on all the goods confided to his care as his own; he has disposed of them, and squandered them, instead of putting them to good account; what is his master about to say? . . . He will deprive him of his stewardship, and perhaps cause him to be imprisoned in a dark dungeon, where he will be condemned to pass the remainder of his life in shedding useless tears, and in a repentance too late to be of any avail. The anger of his master, the horrors of prison and misery, the disgrace with which he will be covered, all unite in terrifying him. Such, and greater still, will be the terror of the impenitent sinner when God shall call on him to give an account of his doings. During life he was the steward of the gifts of nature and grace which our Lord confided to him; he has abused them and squandered them; his conscience is in the most frightful disorder; he sees the justice of God ready to fall on him and crush him with its weight. . . . O my God, I presume to hope that I have the happiness to be in Thy grace; but who can assure me that I shall always persevere in it? Do I not, moreover, know that Thou wilt demand much of one who has received much? Ah! deign to fill me with a salutary fear, which will lead me to prepare myself carefully each day for the account I must one day render Thee of my entire life.

2nd Point.—We ought to prepare ourselves every day to render an account to God.

It depends on ourselves to have nothing to fear at the hour of death; for this end, like good and faithful stewards, we ought to be persuaded that all those gifts of grace and of nature, of which we are the depositories, belong to God and not to us. We ought to use them with the utmost care for the glory of the Master to Whom they belong; in fine, each night we ought to atone for the faults and negligences of the day by a sincere act of contrition. It is wearisome to watch thus over one's self with

unceasing care, to call one's self to an account for every action; but how sweet it will be for us when our divine Lord comes to judge us, to be thus prepared for that awful moment which will decide our eternal destiny . . . Ah! Lord, am I always ready to render an account to Thee? If Thou shouldst ask it of me at this moment, should I not have cause to fear? O my God, my Master, and my Judge, have pity on me, remember that Thou art my Father, and 'enter not into judgment with Thy servant, for no man shall be justified before Thee' (Ps. cxlii. 2), if Thou examinest rigorously. No, my God, let not Thy justice have place with me; deal with me in Thy mercy alone. I lay claim to the precious Blood of Jesus Christ with which to pay my debts, as well as to the assistance of His grace that I may contract no more.

Colloquy with God the Father.—Let us adore Him as our sovereign Lord, on Whom we depend for all things. Let us humble ourselves before Him for the bad use we have made of His gifts, acknowledging ourselves guilty of want of fidelity and of justice towards Him. Let us implore His mercy through the merits of Jesus, promising Him inviolable fidelity for the future.

Resolutions.—To do each one of our actions as if we were to render an account of each to God. To look upon all that is good, both in us and out of us, as belonging to God, and as serving for His glory.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—'Enter not into judgment with Thy servant, O Lord, for in Thy sight no man living shall be justified' (Ps. cxlii. 2). If now I revere a Judge in my Father, I shall find at the last day a Father in my Judge.

Prayer.—Pater Noster.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CXXXIV.

PARABLE OF THE LOST SHEEP.

'The publicans and sinners drew near unto Jesus, to hear Him. And the Pharisees and the Scribes murmured thereat. And He spoke to them this parable, saying: What man of you that hath a hundred sheep, and if he shall lose one of them, doth he not leave the ninety-nine in the desert, and go after that which was lost, until he find it?'—LUKE xv. 1-4.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—Represent to yourself Jesus Christ as the Good Shepherd seeking the lost sheep among the mountains and valleys, and in the rocks and in the precipices.

2*nd Prelude.*—Divine Jesus, fill me with lively gratitude, which may lead me to serve Thee lovingly all the days of my life.

1*st Point.*—Jesus sought us with love when we strayed away from Him.

Jesus represents Himself to us under the touching figure of a Shepherd running after His lost sheep, and this lost sheep is myself. I wandered from Him to run in the paths of sin, of forgetfulness of my salvation, and of the love of the world; my long resistance was not able to weary His persevering tenderness: He only ceased to pursue me when I had ceased to run, and then He took me kindly into His arms and placed me on His shoulders to carry me back to the fold. O my Jesus, recall to my mind the happiness Thou didst cause me to experience in that moment when I at length understood that Thy love alone could satisfy me; engrave it for ever in my memory, and preserve me from the misfortune of becoming again unfaithful to Thee. Divine Shepherd, I place in Thee all my confidence; Thou hast sought me when I fled from Thee; wilt Thou reject me now that I come to Thee, and have no other desire than to put to profit

Thy graces? No, this is impossible. Adorable Heart of Jesus, receive me, and vouchsafe to grant me Thy help; with it I shall triumph over my weakness, and over all that could be capable of withdrawing me from Thee.

2nd Point.—We ought to show our gratitude to Jesus by our constant fidelity.

'There shall be joy in heaven upon one sinner that doth penance, more than upon ninety-nine just who need not penance' (Luke xv. 7). If my repentance has caused such great joy in heaven, the love borne me by Jesus and Mary, the holy angels and all the heavenly court, must be very great; I ought to respond thereto by all the love with which my heart is capable, and prove my gratitude by my fidelity. My divine Lord, of itself my heart is nothing but weakness and corruption; give it Thyself those sentiments with which Thou dost desire it should pay Thee its homage; create within me a pure and fervent heart; inspire me with a sovereign horror for sin, and all that could lead to it; give me a holy ardour for all that could please Thee, and draw me nearer to Thee. Divine Shepherd, Thou hast brought me back to the fold; but other unfaithful sheep afflict still Thy adorable Heart. Ah! my Saviour, I now understand that zeal for the salvation of souls is the surest proof I can give Thee of my gratitude and love; I will labour, then, to gain souls to Thee, happy in being able thus to repair the little pain I have so long caused Thee, and in having it in my power to restore Thee all the glory my sins may have deprived Thee of.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us adore Him, and offer Him humble acts of thanksgiving for His goodness towards us, and for the perseverance with which He deigned to pursue us when we wandered away from Him. Let us ask His pardon for our long resistance to His love, and give ourselves entirely to Him. Let us pray for the conversion of sinners.

Resolution.—To perform all our actions to-day through a motive of love and gratitude.

Offering of the Resolution, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—O Jesus, Thou didst seek me when I fled from Thee, wilt Thou reject me now that I come to Thee? Jesus, Good Shepherd, have mercy on me!

Prayer.—Receive, O Lord, etc., page 43.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CXXXV.

DEPARTURE OF THE PRODIGAL SON.

'And He said: A certain man had two sons. And the younger of them said to his father: Father, give me the portion of substance that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his substance. And not many days after, the younger son, gathering all together, went abroad into a far country; and there wasted his substance living riotously. And after he had spent all, there came a mighty famine in that country, and he began to be in want. And he went and cleaved to one of the citizens of that country. And he sent him into his farm to feed swine. And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks the swine did eat; and no man gave unto him.'—LUKE xv. 11-16.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—Figure to yourself a plain, where the prodigal son, half naked and exhausted with misery, is seated on the ground watching the swine.

2*nd Prelude.*—Grant me grace, O my God, to understand how unhappy and culpable I have been when I have wandered from Thee by sin, and vouchsafe to give me the gift of a true spirit of penance.

1*st Point.*—Departure of the prodigal.

'A certain man had two sons; and the younger of them said to his father: Father, give me the portion of substance that falleth to me' (Luke xv. 11, 12). Let

us consider the conduct of this foolish young man; he leaves his father; he will govern himself; he does not think of the grief he is about to cause him, or the ingratitude with which he repays the benefits he has received from him since his birth; he thinks only of his liberty, his pleasures, and his own will, which he is determined to follow . . . It is thus, O my God, I have been blinded when I have committed sin. Thy loving Heart grieved over my wanderings, Thou didst behold with sorrow the dreadful evils to which I exposed myself, Thou didst kindly beg of me not to forsake Thee, and I closed my ears to Thy paternal voice, and listened only to that of my passions. O days of ingratitude and folly! Shall I ever be able to redeem you with tears sufficiently bitter, or with penance severe enough?

2nd Point.—Wanderings of the prodigal son.

'He went abroad into a far country' (Luke xv. 13). Luxury, intemperance and gaming have soon consumed his substance. He is dying of hunger, and no man will even bestow on him the miserable food of the swine he is reduced to take care of . . . Gifts of grace and of nature, what becomes of you when you are withdrawn from God? . . . A happy disposition, good education, genius, reason, virtue, health, fortune and life; all is lost, all is swallowed up in sin . . . O my God and my Father, I hope Thou hast forgiven my wanderings and miseries; but should I on that account cease to deplore them? Are not the goodness and mercy Thou hast exercised towards me new motives for my great confusion and regret? O Thou best, and kindest, and most patient of all Fathers, inspire me with a sovereign horror for the sins I have committed, as well as for those I may yet commit; cause me to fear and detest even the shadow of anything displeasing to Thee. Grant that, flying from sin and the occasions of sin, I may endeavour carefully to expiate my past sins by the sincerity of my sorrow and the fervour of my love.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us ask of Him the grace to conceive a profound sorrow for our past sins, and a lively horror for all that could lead us to commit sin in future. Let us thank Him for the goodness with which he has pardoned us as soon as we returned to Him. Let us make several acts of contrition and love, promising Him to be very faithful in future.

Resolutions.—To avoid with care the smallest faults. Frequently to raise our heart to God and express to Him our sorrow for our sins.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—'O Lord, wash me yet more from my iniquities' (Ps. l. 3). 'Father, I have sinned against Thee' (Luke xv. 18).

Prayer.—Pater noster.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CXXXVI.

RETURN OF THE PRODIGAL SON.

'And, returning to himself, he said: How many hired servants in my father's house abound with bread, and I here perish with hunger! I will arise, and will go to my father, and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee; I am not now worthy to be called thy son; make me as one of thy hired servants. And rising up, he came to his father. And when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and was moved with compassion, and running to him, fell upon his neck, and kissed him. And he said to his servants: Bring forth quickly the first robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet. And bring hither the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and make merry; because this my son was dead, and is come to life again; was lost, and is found.'—LUKE xv. 17-24.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—Represent to yourself the house of the prodigal's father, and behold the manner with which the venerable old man receives his guilty son.

2nd Prelude.—Jesus, my adorable Father, grant me grace to expiate all my sins by love and fidelity.

1st Point.—Repentance of the prodigal son.

The sad position of this guilty son causes him to enter into himself; he reflects. God mixes with his unlawful pleasures a salutary bitterness which opens his eyes . . . he thinks of his past happiness, he compares his actual state with that of his father's servants who want for nothing. . . . Such reflections I have made when I thought of returning to God, and ought still to make them, for who can say that I am as fervent as I ought to be after receiving so many graces? Alas! I have, like the prodigal, wasted the good things of my Father's house, and am reduced to great indigence, while so many who have received less than I have, are now loaded with merit and virtue. . . The prodigal son makes the resolution of returning to his father and saying to him: 'Father, I have sinned against Heaven and before thee, I am not now worthy to be called thy son; make me as one of thy hired servants' (Luke xv. 18, 19). His resolution is immediately carried out. He rises; he sets out without delay; he hastens to go to his father; but in what a condition—covered with a few rags, without shoes; but what does it signify? he goes. . . My soul is divested of virtue and heavenly gifts; its indigence is extreme; but my God is my Father. . . O Father of mercies! my resolution is taken, I return to Thee; no more tepidity, no more cowardice or negligence in Thy service; receive me, then, O my Father, and forgive me the past.

2nd Point.—The reception of the prodigal.

His father perceives him from a distance, runs to meet him, rejoicing, and embraces him without making him any reproach. . . 'Bring forth quickly the first robe and put it on him—and shoes on his feet' (Luke xv. 22). He causes a banquet to be prepared, to which he invites all his family. . . What sentiments must then have filled the prodigal! What an agreeable surprise! What love and

gratitude must he not have felt for so good a father! What sorrow for his past wanderings! It would be difficult to conceive them, and still more so to express them. What love henceforth for his father! What precautions not to grieve him more! O my God, it is thus I ought to repay Thy goodness: Thou hast received me so many times, and Thou wilt again receive me if I sincerely desire to return to Thee! Ah! may my entire life be consecrated to gratitude and fidelity, and to the perfect accomplishment of Thy holy Will.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us return to Him with all our heart, like the prodigal son, and say to Him with confusion and sorrow, but with love and confidence, all that the sight of our sins and that of His mercies shall suggest to us.

Resolutions.—To avoid carefully the smallest faults. To accomplish from a motive of love the Will of God in the least things.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—'I will arise and go to my Father' (Luke xv. 18). Jesus, Father of the poor, have pity on me!

Prayer.—Receive, O Lord, etc., page 43.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

CONTEMPLATION CXXXVII.

PARABLE OF THE PRODIGAL SON.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—Call to mind how the prodigal son, having been reduced through his excesses to the most frightful misery, returned to his father, and was received by him with inexpressible joy and affection.

2*nd Prelude.*—Represent to yourself in the first place a desert land where the prodigal is guarding the swine,

then his father's house, decorated to celebrate with joy his return home.

3rd Prelude.—Teach me, O Lord, what dreadful misery is met with afar from Thee, and what treasures of grace and mercy Thou dost offer those who desire sincerely to return to Thee.

1st Point.—Consider the persons. In a land laid waste by famine, the prodigal son covered with shame, in the midst of swine; he is reduced to the most frightful misery, dying of hunger. The companions of his evil career with whom he has wasted his substance have abandoned him. Far away, in his father's house, I behold a venerable old man, plunged in grief—for what? He has lost but an ungrateful child; is this, then, so great a loss? Oh yes! it is a very great loss for this unhappy old man, since he is a father. My God, it is Yourself You present to us under this figure, and I am that child.

2nd and 3rd Points.—Listen to the words, and consider the actions. The miserable young man is reduced to a state which inspires not only pity but horror. Let us behold him in the midst of those unclean animals to the level of which his disorders have almost reduced him. Let us inhale the infection by which he is surrounded; let us cast our eyes on the rags which barely suffice to cover him. Let us look at him more closely still, and behold his heart. To what degradation is he not reduced! The food of the swine is all that he desires. Yet, is that even allowed him? He has become an object of execration and contempt for all men. What then will he do? Will he remain where he is, and die in the miserable state in which his excesses have cast him? No, he will not. I behold him weeping and blushing with very shame; he stammers forth the words 'sinner' and 'father.' Hope seems to revive within him. I will arise, he says, and I will go! Thou wilt go! To whom, then? 'To my father' (Luke xv. 18).

To thy father! but dost thou believe, or dare to hope, that he will stoop to be such again to thee? O wonder! who could have ever believed it? This prodigal child does rise up; he has gone to seek him he called his father. Behold him not at his feet, but in his arms. They weep together and embrace each other. The father falls on the bosom of his son, and in his emotion covers him with kisses. This poor child tries to utter: 'My father, I have sinned against thee; make me as one of thy hired servants' (Luke xv. 19). Not so; the title and honours of a son of the family are restored to him. In finding once more his father he has regained everything—good clothing, delicate and sumptuous feasting, songs of joy, reputation, riches, everything, even to exciting the jealousy of a brother who had always been virtuous. O Jesus! it is thus Thou dost receive sinners. May glory be given to Thee, and peace and confidence to me. Ah! may my heart be filled with these even to overflowing.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us say to Him all that a loving repentance can inspire a guilty child with towards so good a Father. Let us beg of Him to imprint so deeply in our heart the hatred of sin and remembrance of His mercies, that our whole life may become a perpetual exercise of gratitude and fidelity.

Resolutions.—To fly with horror from the least sin. To perform all our actions through love.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—My God, Thy mercy is my only justice. 'I will arise and go to my Father' (Luke xv. 18).

Prayer.—Receive, O Lord, etc., page 43.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CXXXVIII.

LAZARUS AND THE RICH GLUTTON.

'There was a certain rich man, who was clothed in purple and fine linen: and feasted sumptuously every day. And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, who lay at his gate, full of sores, desiring to be filled with the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table, and no one did give him: moreover, the dogs came and licked his sores. And it came to pass that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom. And the rich man also died: and he was buried in hell.'—LUKE xvi. 19-22.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—Imagine you see the place of rest where Lazarus has been received into the company of Abraham and all the holy Patriarchs. Then behold hell open, and see the rich glutton therein cruelly tormented in the flames.

2*nd Prelude.*—Deliver me, O Lord, from all illusion, and grant that I may esteem what the world despises.

1*st Point.*—Condition of the rich man and of Lazarus in this world.

'There was a certain rich man, who was clothed in purple and fine linen: and feasted sumptuously every day' (Luke xvi. 19). This man was cruel, which is the common result of luxury and intemperance. 'And there was a certain beggar, named Lazarus, who lay at his gate, full of sores' (Luke xvi. 20), an object of disgust and contempt for the rich glutton, who left him to die of hunger. 'The dogs' of the house, more humane than their master, 'came and licked his sores' (Luke xvi. 21). But whilst men abandoned him, God and His angels looked down on him from heaven; his resignation, his patience and humility shone with the purest lustre, while the rich proud man harboured only vice within his soul. Nevertheless, he was considered happy; his company was sought, the

poor were contemned. . . . O world, how false are thy judgments! Can I any longer esteem what thou dost esteem—fortune, show and pleasure? or despise what thou dost despise—poverty, humiliation, suffering, and the solid virtues that are their attendants? . . . World reprobated by my God, I despise for ever thy spirit and thy judgments; humiliation and poverty are the livery of Jesus Christ; if I am not found worthy to wear it myself, I will at least respect those who are clothed with it.

2nd Point.—The condition of Lazarus and the rich man after death.

'And it came to pass that the beggar died and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom. And the rich man also died, and he was buried in hell' (Luke xvi. 22). Here all illusion ceases; things show themselves in a new light; many have envied the lot of the rich man, and despised that of the poor beggar while both were living. What choice would they now make? . . . The rich glutton, given over to the most dreadful torments, raises his eyes, and beholds in the distance Lazarus in the bosom of Abraham. . . He cries aloud and begs, What? To be delivered from the flames which devour him? No; only that they will let one single drop of water fall on his parched tongue . . . but he cannot obtain it. Where are now the delicacies on which he feasted while on earth? They have passed away for ever; he has sown in corruption, now he must reap in death. Lazarus sowed in tears, and he now reaps in never-ending joy. O my God, what a happy lot is that which leads to so precious an issue! Abjection, suffering, privations; it is these God reserves for His most dear friends, and I understand the reason why. O my Saviour, teach me how greatly I ought to humble myself, when Thou dost spare me these sufferings in order to yield to my extreme weakness. Give me grace to rejoice when Thou dost deign to grant me a share in them.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us pray to Him to enlighten

our soul with such pure and penetrating light as may enable us to judge of all things truly. Let us humble ourselves before Him for the little value we set on humiliation and suffering. Let us petition for strength to accept willingly all those trials He shall please to send us in His love, in order to conduct us to heaven.

Resolution. — To support with courage, and if possible with joy, whatever trials and humiliations may befall us.

Offering of the Resolution, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—'He that sows in tears shall reap in joy' (Ps. cxxv. 5). Time is short, but eternity will never end.

Prayer.—Pater Noster.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CXXXIX.

THE NECESSITY OF PERSEVERING PRAYER.

'And Jesus spoke also a parable to them, that we ought always to pray, and not to faint; saying: There was a judge in a certain city, who feared not God, nor regarded man. And there was a certain widow in that city, and she came to him, saying: Avenge me of my adversary. And he would not for a long time. But afterwards he said within himself: Although I fear not God, nor regard man, yet, because this widow is troublesome to me, I will avenge her, lest, continually coming, she weary me.'—LUKE xviii. 1-5.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—Represent to yourself our Lord in a house in Jerusalem, instructing His disciples.

2*nd Prelude.*—Lord, teach me to pray; teach me what I ought to ask of Thee, and the manner in which I should ask it.

1*st Point.*—The necessity of constant prayer.

'We ought always to pray, and not to faint' (Luke

xviii. 1). Why must we always pray? Because we can do nothing without God's help; the enemies of our salvation are numberless; everywhere they lay snares for us, and our weakness to resist them is extreme, unless we have recourse to God by prayer. Again, why must we always pray? Because prayer is the key to all the treasures of heaven; by it we obtain light to know ourselves, grace to overcome ourselves, and the unction of divine love to enable us to embrace with ardour the practice of every virtue. We must pray always, because this life is made up of troubles and labours, and prayer is the source of all true consolation; the joy of the holy Spirit, and the sweet communications of the Lord, are the portion of prayerful souls. We must always pray, because prayer glorifies our Lord and enriches us with merits. O my Saviour! teach me how to pray without ever wearying of this holy exercise, and vouchsafe to open unto me the treasures Thou hast prepared for those who pray to Thee with constant fervour.

2nd Point.—Means of rendering our prayer constant.

'We ought always to pray, and not to faint' (Luke xviii. 1). Prayer is constant when we practise a holy recollection, when we often raise our heart to God full of the desire to please Him, when we work and act for Him, when we persevere in the wish to do His holy Will in all things and desire to increase in His love; it is thus the saints have prayed; their entire life was a continual prayer; and thus they received from heaven the most abundant favours. God loved to communicate Himself to them, to speak to them in the depth of their heart; He discovered to them secrets hidden from careless souls, and taught them to do each one of their actions so as to merit by each. O my God, why do I not imitate their example? Happiness, peace, and rest are enjoyed when the loving remembrance of Thy divine presence is maintained; the holy habit of speaking to Thee interiorly renders freedom from sin, as well as the practice of virtue, easy; then joys

are purer, pains less bitter, and labour sweeter. Never permit me therefore, O Lord, to be discouraged by imaginary difficulties or groundless fears; Thou art the best of Fathers, and I am Thy child; this title alone tells me how sweet it will be to discourse with Thee in constant prayer, if I will but apply myself to acquire this habit.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us ask Him for the spirit of prayer and recollection. Let us beg of Him to divest us of all those false ideas which cause us to dread the practice of prayer, making us understand that there is nothing in it but what is easy and sweet. Let us promise Him to make generously the sacrifices of curiosity and thoughtlessness so necessary to obtain so great a grace; begging Him to bless our goodwill.

Resolutions.—To practise recollection. Often to raise our heart to God. To do all our actions with a view to please Him.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—'We ought always to pray, and not to faint' (Luke xviii. 1). 'Lord, teach us to pray' (Luke xi. 1).

Prayer.—Pater Noster.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CXL.

PARABLE OF THE PHARISEE AND THE PUBLICAN.

'And to some who trusted in themselves as just, and despised others, He spoke also this parable: Two men went up into the Temple to pray: the one was a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee, standing, prayed thus with himself: O God, I give Thee thanks that I am not as the rest of men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, as also is this publican. I fast twice in a week; I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican, standing afar off, would not so much as lift up his eyes towards heaven, but struck his breast, saying, O God, be merciful to me a sinner. I say to you, this man went down into his house justified rather than the other; because everyone that exalteth himself shall be humbled, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.'—LUKE xviii. 9-15.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—Represent to yourself the Temple, and behold the Pharisee standing therein with a proud and haughty air. Then see the publican humbly prostrate, and imagine God, from His sanctuary, observing them both.

2*nd Prelude.*—My God, grant me the gift of sincere humility, which will render my prayer efficacious and engage Thee to show mercy to me.

1*st Point.*—God rejects the prayer of the proud, but hears that of the humble.

'Two men went up into the Temple to pray; the one was a Pharisee and the other a publican. The Pharisee, standing, prayed thus with himself: O God, I give Thee thanks that I am not as the rest of men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, as also is this publican . . . I fast twice in the week, etc.' (Luke xviii. 10, seq.). He had only come before God to condemn his neighbour and enumerate his own pretended good works; he believed himself just, and did not know that his pride rendered him odious in the sight of God. The publican, on the contrary, deeply penetrated with his unworthiness, offered

to God the homage of a contrite and humble heart, and his prayer pierced the heavens . . . O my Saviour, teach me to pray in like manner; I have sinned against Thee, and if I say that I have not sinned, the truth is not in me. Never, then, permit me to exalt myself, or look upon myself in such a false light as to see within me any good which does not exist. Preserve me from all Pharisaical pride; grant also that I may abstain from judging my neighbour; and that, abasing myself in my own esteem beneath all Thy servants, I may receive from Thee those abundant graces which Thou art pleased to bestow on souls solidly humble.

2nd Point.—Pride destroys the merits of the just, and humility justifies sinners.

'I am not as the rest of men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers: I fast twice in the week; I give tithes of all that I possess' (Luke xviii. 11, 12). The Pharisee actually did all this: how many good works lost for the miserable satisfaction of pride! O God! this vice must then be a subtle poison, since it suffices to destroy all the good we can do! . . . The publican has committed many sins, but one single act of humility effaces them; humility covers all sin and supplies the place of all virtue. Grant me then, O my God, to know the value of this inestimable treasure. This precious virtue is hidden in the depths of Thy Sacred Heart, into which we can enter only by self-contempt, esteem for others, and confidence in Thy mercies. My God and my All, place me in this way of truth, and I shall be ready for all Thy designs, and worthy of Thy gifts; grant that I may know myself and that I may know Thee; teach me that I am mere nothingness and misery; that Thou art power, goodness, and mercy, and that my safety consists alone in the pity Thou dost deign to show towards the little ones and the weak.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us thank Him for the lessons He deigns to give us, asking Him for grace to profit thereby. Let us produce at His feet several acts of self-

contempt, and confidence in His goodness. Let us pray to Him earnestly to grant us the gift of sincere humility and the spirit of prayer.

Resolution.—To reject carefully every thought that could lead us to esteem ourself or despise others.

Offering of the Resolution, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—'He that exalteth himself shall be humbled, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted' (Luke xiii. 14). 'O God, be merciful to me a sinner' (Luke xviii. 13).

Prayer.—Soul of Christ, etc., page 4.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

CONTEMPLATION CXLI.

THE PHARISEE AND THE PUBLICAN.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—'Two men went up into the Temple to pray; the one was a Pharisee, and the other a publican' (Luke xviii. 10).

2*nd Prelude.*—Image to yourself anew the interior of the Temple of Jerusalem.

3*rd Prelude.*—Grant me grace, O Lord, ever to pray with humility.

1*st Point.*—Consider the persons. The Pharisee; he is standing erect in a conspicuous part of the Temple; he holds up his head with a haughty air, . . . he is very glad to be seen, . . . he does not think of humbling himself before God. . . . The publican is near the door, prostrate, . . . he does not dare to lift up his eyes to heaven, so greatly is he penetrated with humility and compunction. . . . Our Lord looks on him kindly, and points him out to His angels. . . . Those who go in and out of the Temple pay no regard to him; but they admire the Pharisee, who passes for a faithful observer of the law. . . . It is thus

men judge, for they see only the exterior. . . . Ought I not to be insensible alike to their praise and to their blame? . . . Ought I not to distrust myself when I am tempted to judge ill of anyone? . . . Perhaps those I should condemn are giving joy to the Sacred Heart of our Lord, like the publican; whilst I should be likening myself to the Pharisee by preferring myself to them.

2nd Point.—Listen to the words. 'O God, I give Thee thanks that I am not as the rest of men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, as also is this publican: I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess' . . . (Luke xviii. 11, 12). Contempt for others, and self-esteem, are the two principal features of pride; am I entirely exempt from these? . . . Let us listen now to the publican: 'O God, be merciful to me a sinner' (Luke xviii. 13). It is from the depth of his heart that his prayer springs; he beholds in himself an abyss of misery, and in God an abyss of mercy; an humble confidence fills his soul. . . . O my God, such are the dispositions which please Thee; why, then, have I not understood before now that the word '*sinner*,' when it comes from an humble heart, suffices to excite Thy pity? Why have I not constantly on my lips this prayer which suits me so well: 'O God, be merciful to me a sinner'? O Father of mercies! I am a sinner; it is my only title to Thy goodness; have mercy, then, on me, and wash me from my stains; have mercy on me, and hinder me from relapsing, for a sinner is capable of nothing but sin, unless Thy pity preserve him from his own corruption.

3rd Point.—Consider the actions. They are all interior; it is God Who works in secret; He rejects the prayer of the proud man, and accepts that of the humble publican; He inclines towards him, and even takes possession of his heart. . . . Yes, He enters his heart, since our Lord assures us that at this moment the publican receives the grace of being transformed from a sinner to a saint. . . . O my God, how powerful must be a prayer dictated by confi-

dence and humility ! . . . What graces I should receive, if in the moment when Thy precious Blood flows over my soul in the tribunal of penance I addressed such prayers to Thee ! . . . Grant, O my God, that I may understand how good Thou art, and how miserable I am ; grant that I may know Thee, and that I may know myself, that so I may hate myself and love Thee. Teach me ever to repeat with compunction, abandonment, and love : 'O God, be merciful to me a sinner' (Luke xviii. 13).

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us humble ourselves at His feet, acknowledging ourselves sinners, but at the same time owning that He is infinite goodness, and praying Him to have mercy on us. Let us earnestly beg Him to grant us this deep conviction of our own miseries, together with that spirit of confidence and love so pleasing to His adorable Heart. Let us also ask Him for that generosity in His service so fitted to excite confidence in His goodness.

Resolutions.—To say all our prayers with humility and confidence. To produce frequent acts of humility during the day.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—'O God, be merciful to me a sinner' (Luke xviii. 13).

Prayer.—Soul of Christ, etc., page 4.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

CONTEMPLATION CXLII.

JESUS BLESSES LITTLE CHILDREN.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—'Then were little children presented to Him, that He should impose hands upon them and pray. And the disciples rebuked them. But Jesus said to them : Suffer the little children, and forbid them not, to come

to Me; for the kingdom of heaven is for such. And when He had imposed hands upon them, He departed from thence' (Matt. xix. 13, 14, 15).

2nd Prelude, or Composition of Place.—Figure to yourself a beautiful country.

3rd Prelude.—Adorable Saviour, be pleased to grant me the grace to become like unto a little child by the purity of my heart and by the child-like virtues which are so pleasing to Thee.

1st Point.—Consider the persons. Our Lord, full of amiability and kindness; He is sitting at the foot of a tree. . . . His apostles are around Him. . . . Some pious mothers draw near; they lead their little children to Jesus, that He may bless them. . . . Let us behold these little innocents, holding out their arms towards their Saviour. . . . Oh! how greatly the loving Heart of our Lord is moved at this spectacle! . . . Happy children, happy mothers, what graces do you not receive! Jesus wishes little children to be led to Him, and to be taught to know Him and love Him. Am I faithful in seconding these intentions of His Sacred Heart? . . .

2nd and 3rd Points.—Listen to the words and consider the actions. The apostles, displeased that their divine Master should be importuned, repulse with rough words both the mothers and children; but Jesus says: 'Suffer the little children . . . to come to Me, for the kingdom of heaven is for such' (Matt. xix. 14). . . . My Saviour, if we must resemble children to be agreeable to Thee, teach me how I can imitate them. . . . They have candour on their countenance and simplicity in their heart; they are pure, innocent, and docile; they love those who instruct them, reprove them, and even correct them. . . . They are not anxious to draw attention. All these virtues, O my God, belong to Thy true disciples; cause me to know them well, and help me to practise them. . . . The little children draw near; Jesus imposes His hands on them and blesses them; how happy they are to receive so

precious a benison! . . . How happy I am, also, O my adorable Saviour, when Thou dost deign to come forth from Thy holy Tabernacles to grant me a similar favour! Ah! do not permit that I should be insensible to it; make me profit by it as fully as I ought; Thy benediction is a rampart against my enemies, a remedy for the miseries of my soul, an abundant effusion of all Thy graces; fill my heart, then, with gratitude and joy whenever I have the happiness to receive Thy blessing.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us testify to Him our gratitude for the touching proofs of goodness He has given us during His mortal life, on so many occasions, that He might manifest to us the sentiments of His adorable Heart, and excite ours to confidence and love. Let us ask Him for grace to practise the amiable virtues portrayed for us by children. Let us beg of Him to shed on us His divine blessings.

Resolutions.—To go to God in prayer with child-like simplicity and confidence. To impose some practice of humility and obedience on ourselves, according to our position.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—Jesus, Thou art my Father, make me truly Thy child. 'Suffer little children . . . to come unto Me; for the kingdom of heaven is for such' (Matt. xix. 14).

Prayer.—Pater Noster.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

CONTEMPLATION CXLIII.

THE RICH YOUNG MAN.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—'And behold one came and said to Him: Good Master, what shall I do that I may possess life ever-

lasting? Who said to him . . . 'If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments. . . .' And he replied: 'All these have I kept from my youth, what is yet wanting to me? Jesus saith to him: If thou wilt be perfect, go sell what thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me. And when the young man had heard this word, he went away sad, for he had great possessions' (Matt. xix. 16, seq.).

2nd Prelude.—Represent to yourself one of the streets of Jerusalem.

3rd Prelude.—Grant me grace, O my God, not to attach my heart to the riches and goods of this life.

1st Point.—Consider the persons. Our Lord, His apostles, the young man who presents himself. Ah! if he only knew what an inestimable favour was about to be offered him! but it is hidden from his eyes, because his heart is attached to his wealth. How many graces we lose, how many opportunities of salvation we allow to escape us, when we nourish some secret passion which intercepts the divine light!

2nd and 3rd Points.—Listen to the words and consider the actions. 'Good Master, what shall I do that I may possess eternal life?' Jesus answers with kindness: 'Keep the commandments' (Matt. xix. 16, 17). The young man replied: 'All these have I kept from my youth.' Then our divine Lord looked on him and loved him, and said: 'Yet one thing is wanting to thee. Go, sell what thou hast, and come and follow Me' (Luke xviii. 22). This is the counsel of the highest perfection, the offer of the most precious grace. The young man balances what is offered him, and what he must give up; he has been told 'thou shalt have a treasure in heaven.' But, *sell all!* He refuses the sacrifice, because his earthly possessions affect him more than those of heaven. He goes away. The loving Heart of Jesus is sad. He exclaims: 'How hard it is for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven. Amen, I say to you, that a rich man shall hardly

enter into the kingdom of heaven' (Matt. xix. 23). His disciples are astonished. For the third time Jesus repeats, 'How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God. It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God' (Luke xviii. 24, 25), *i.e.*, one who is attached to his riches. And the disciples, still more astonished, asked each other: 'Who, then, can be saved?' And Jesus, looking on them, said: 'The things that are impossible with men, are possible with God' (Luke xviii. 26, 27). Grace renders detachment from riches possible amid the seductions of their possession; confidence, then, in God; but fear and self-diffidence; the path is slippery. O my God, my hope is in Thee alone.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us thank Him for the numberless lessons He gives us to enable us to avoid the perils which surround us. If we be poor, let us return Him fervent acts of thanksgiving; if, on the contrary, we are possessed of the goods of this world, let us beg of Him never to permit us to attach our hearts to them. Let us elicit several acts of confidence, resting forcibly on these words: 'All things are possible with God.' And again: 'I can do all things in Him Who strengtheneth me.' Let us form practical resolutions.

Resolution.—To impose on ourselves some sacrifice in favour of the poor, that we may obtain the grace not to be too much attached to our possessions.

Offering of the Resolution, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—'All things are possible with God' (Matt. xix. 26). 'I can do all things in Him that strengtheneth me' (Phil. iv. 13).

Prayer.—Receive, O Lord, etc., page 43.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CXLIV.

RECOMPENSES PROMISED TO THE SPIRIT OF DETACHMENT.

'Then Peter, answering, said to Jesus: Behold, we have left all things and have followed Thee; what, therefore, shall we have? And Jesus said to them: Amen, I say to you, that you, who have followed Me, in the regeneration, when the Son of Man shall sit on the seat of His majesty, you shall also sit on twelve seats, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.'—MATT. xix. 27, 28.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—Represent to yourself anew one of the streets of Jerusalem, where our Lord is with His disciples.

2*nd Prelude.*—Grant me grace, O my God, to detach my heart perfectly from all that I possess.

1*st Point.*—In what does the spirit of poverty and detachment consist?

'Amen, I say to you, that you, who have followed Me, in the regeneration, when the Son of Man shall sit on the seat of His majesty, you shall also sit on twelve seats, judging the twelve tribes of Israel' (Matt. xix. 28). The kingdom of heaven is promised to those who shall have imitated Jesus by practising detachment from the things of this world; and that promise regards three sorts of persons: First, those who have voluntarily renounced, for the love of God, all this world's possessions. If I am not called to walk in this path, I ought at least to respect those who are engaged therein, and be on my guard against turning away from it anyone whomsoever. The promises of Jesus Christ are addressed in the second place to those who, ranked by Providence among the poor, accept their position with submission, and practise the virtues which attend it—humility, patience, courage, etc. Lastly, Jesus promises heaven to all those who, possessing the goods of this world, are not attached to them. Let us remark attentively that it is indispensable to salvation not to be too much

attached to the things of this world; and that it is difficult to possess them without being too much attached to them. This third class of poor is, then, the least numerous, a fact which caused Jesus to exclaim: 'Amen, I say to you that a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven' (Matt. xix. 23). Oh, how calculated are these words to make me tremble, if I possess the riches of this life! I ought to console myself, nevertheless, since our divine Lord adds: 'All things are possible with God' (Matt. xix. 26), and I am certain of His help if I ask Him for it sincerely.

2nd Point.—We ought to desire and beg unceasingly for the spirit of poverty and detachment. The detachment from riches is a gift of grace, which I cannot too greatly esteem, or too earnestly ask from our Lord; the world in which I live relishes little the morality of Jesus; it says, '*Happy are the rich*,' and acts consistently; I am not appointed to judge it, but I ought to judge myself. I promised at my baptism to conduct myself in all things conformably to the example and maxims of my divine Model; I ought, in consequence, to question my heart, and see if it do not partake of the spirit of the world and say with it, '*Happy are the rich*;' if it do not dread to excess privations and poverty; if it do not admit within itself certain anxieties injurious to the paternal Providence of our Lord; if it despise not the obscure condition of the poor. O my divine Jesus! Thou knowest all the recesses of this heart which belongs to Thee, much better than I know them myself. Thou beholdest therein all its defects and miseries. Ah! change it; Thou art all-powerful, since Thou art God. My God, my Father, and my Saviour, make my heart like unto Thine. Thou art my sovereign good, my only riches for time and eternity; never, then, suffer me to attach myself to earthly treasures, which will escape from me at the hour of death; but grant that, making use of them for the accomplishment of Thy holy Will alone, I may deserve to possess the imperishable

riches of Thy eternal kingdom, and that, above all, I may possess Thee, O my Jesus, Who alone canst satisfy the desires of my heart.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us beg of Him to replenish us with His Spirit, and detach us from the world and its riches, that we may attach ourselves to the treasures of our heavenly country. Let us renew the promises we made at baptism, begging for the necessary grace to fulfil them faithfully.

Resolutions.—To unite to the poverty of Jesus the little privations we may have to endure. Often to ask our divine Lord to give us the spirit of poverty and detachment.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven' (Matt. v. 3).

Prayer.—Soul of Christ, etc., page 4.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CXLV.

PARABLE OF THE LABOURERS SENT TO THE VINEYARD.

'The kingdom of heaven is like to a householder, who went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard.'—MATT. XX. 1.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—Represent to yourself a road in which our divine Lord is walking, surrounded by His disciples.

2*nd Prelude.*—Never permit me, O my God, to be deaf to Thy voice.

1*st Point.*—God calls us to His service from the commencement of our life.

'The kingdom of heaven is like to a householder, who went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard' (Matt. xx. 1). This householder is God; we

are the labourers, and the vine is our soul, which we must cultivate with care, that it may bring forth fruits of justice and sanctity. Our life is a day which passes away rapidly; our Lord calls us from early morning, and we ought to respond faithfully to His voice. Have I no reproach to make myself on this subject? Have my early years been consecrated to the love and service of my God? He loves exceedingly the homage of a pure heart which sin has not yet contaminated. Ah! if I have been so unhappy as not to attach myself to Him from the moment I was capable of knowing Him, ought I not to shed bitter tears over such a loss? Ought I not endeavour to repair it as far as I possibly can by additional fervour? Yes, O my God, I repent not having consecrated to Thee the earliest affections of my existence, not having laboured in early life to repress my rising passions, and to practise those virtues with which Thou dost wish to see me adorned. Alas! Lord, how many of my best years have I not lost! How many graces have I not neglected, how greatly have I grieved Thy paternal Heart! Ah! at least from this moment every instant of my life shall be employed in Thy holy service, and consecrated to Thy love.

2nd Point.—God waits for us with goodness, and only ceases to call us when we cease to live.

'And going out about the third hour, he saw others standing in the market-place idle. And he said to them, "Go you also into my vineyard, and I will give you what shall be just. . . And again he went out about the sixth and the ninth hour, and did in like manner. But about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing, and he saith to them, Why stand you here all the day idle? And he saith to them, Go ye also into my vineyard' (Matt. xx. 3-7). Our first infidelities afflict sensibly the Sacred Heart of our Lord, but His love, stronger than our malice, perseveres, notwithstanding our ingratitude. God waits for us. He calls us a second and a third time; even to the end of our life He contrives for us the means of

conversion. O infinite Goodness! how is it that my heart has so long refused to give itself to Thee? I should reproach myself for being wanting in gratitude towards creatures; can I, then, be wanting towards Thee, O my God, without rendering myself guilty of ingratitude? And again, ought I not to fear that Thy love, too long despised, should give place to Thy justice, and that the end of my life should arrive and put an end to the prolonged delays of Thy patience? O my God and my Father, never permit me to be surprised by death before having commenced in earnest to serve Thee fervently. Thou callest me again at this moment; it may perhaps be for the last time; perhaps it is for me the eleventh hour, after which Thou wilt call me no more. My resolution then is taken, O my God, I will no longer delay. 'I come to do Thy will, O my God' (Ps. xxxix. 8, 9); inspire me with the resolutions I ought to make, and give me the necessary graces to be faithful to them.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us thank Him for having deigned to call us from our earliest years to the happiness of loving Him, and to the glory of serving Him. Let us ask His pardon with lively sorrow for our first resistances to His grace. Let us recall to our mind the different periods of our life wherein our dear Lord has vouchsafed to repeat His loving invitations, without our responding to His voice; and make acts of gratitude, and contrition for our infidelity. Let us now at least give ourselves entirely to Him, begging Him to strengthen, by His powerful grace, our firm resolution to serve Him faithfully in future.

Resolution.—Not to allow ourselves to-day any voluntary negligence in the accomplishment of the will of God.

Offering of the Resolution, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—'Behold I come to do Thy will, O my God' (Ps. xxxix. 8, 9), and Thy will is that I be a saint.

Prayer.—Receive, O Lord, etc., page 43.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CXLVI.

CONTINUATION OF THE PARABLE OF THE LABOURERS SENT TO THE VINEYARD.

'And when evening was come, the lord of the vineyard saith to his steward: Call the labourers, and pay them their hire.'—MATT. xx. 2.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude*, as before, page 108.

2*nd Prelude.*—Grant me grace, O my God, ever to draw renewed courage from the hope of Thy eternal rewards.

1*st Point.*—God Himself will be our eternal recompense.

'And when evening was come, the lord of the vineyard saith to his steward: 'Call the labourers, and pay them their hire' (Matt. xx. 8). The evening is the end of life; then God will call us to Himself, to recompense us for our labours; but what is the recompense He has prepared for us in His infinite goodness? A recompense so magnificent that we are incapable of conceiving the smallest idea of it, for He will give us Himself. We cannot understand in this world what it is to possess God; but when His powerful hand shall have broken the chains of mortality that fasten us to the earth, our soul will feel the want of being united to God, her Sovereign Good. We shall fly towards Him with the rapidity of an arrow shot forth from a vigorous arm; we shall exclaim, in the burning ardour of our love: 'As the stag panteth after the fountains of water, so doth my soul pant after Thee, O my God' (Ps. lxi. 2). And our Lord, listening to our voice, will come and satisfy all our desires; He will take possession of us, and cause our hearts to overflow with delights; they shall be filled with heavenly sweetness; and these delights will be as a vast sea, infinite and unbounded; our souls

will not be able to contain them. We shall be inundated with them : drowned in them; we shall be lost in God, like to a drop of water in the ocean, or a small spark in the general conflagration of an immense furnace ; then shall we exclaim in our transports of love and happiness : 'My beloved to me, and I to Him' (Cant. ii. 16). This divine union and perfect bliss will be secured to us for an endless eternity. O my God and my All ! ought I to fear doing too much for Thee, when Thou dost promise me so great a recompense ?

2nd Point.—We shall find in God everything that is good united.

In giving Himself to us, God will give us all that is good, since He is the inexhaustible Source of all good. Profound peace, infinite joy, unmixed happiness, will then be our lot ; we shall know perfectly all the perfections of our God ; we shall contemplate them ; we shall be consumed with love for His infinite charms, and this love, ever increasing and ever satisfied, will cause us to taste of those delights which it is not given to human understanding to conceive. We shall know the wisdom of God, His power, His goodness ; we shall see all the secret ways He has made use of, and all the means His love has employed to bring about our salvation ; we shall measure the length, and breadth, and height, and depth of the love of the Sacred Heart of Jesus ; gratitude and love will cause us to sing forth divine canticles ; we shall unite our voice to that of the heavenly spirits, to proclaim for ever the benefits and glory of the Lord ; consumed with His pure love, we shall be penetrated with zeal for His glory ; the infinite and essential glory which is in Him will discover itself to our eyes, and will overwhelm us with joy ; we shall behold the accidental glory which His creatures procure Him ; we shall see His beatitude, and shall rejoice in it ; we shall behold the beatitude of Mary and of all the angels and saints, and we shall be closely united with them in the bonds of the closest love. O heavenly Sion, what

wonderful things are related of thee! O my heavenly country, when shall I be received within thy walls? O God, call me to Thee! But it is Thy Will that I labour before being recompensed; help me then with Thy grace, and nothing will seem too painful to ensure my claims to Thy heavenly inheritance.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us pay Him profound homage of love and gratitude, since He has merited for us, and offers us, eternal rewards. Let us humble ourselves for the little zeal we have had up to the present to render ourselves worthy of them, promising Him constant fidelity in future. Let us beg of Him to inspire us with esteem and desire of the rewards of heaven, in order to keep up our ardour, that so we may deserve them.

Resolution.—To encourage ourselves with the thought of heaven in those occasions when virtue seems difficult to practise.

Offering of the Resolution, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—If the labour affrights me, let the recompense encourage me. God Himself will be my eternal reward.

Prayer.—Pater Noster.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

CONTEMPLATION CXLVII.

THE RAISING OF LAZARUS.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—Recall to your mind that Martha and Mary, the sisters of Lazarus, sent a message to Jesus to inform Him of their brother's illness; that our divine Lord, after having remained several days longer in the place where He was, returned to Bethania, and that before an immense crowd of witnesses He there raised Lazarus to life, after he had been dead four days (John xi.).

2nd Prelude.—Represent to yourself the road to Bethania, the house of Martha and Mary, and the tomb of Lazarus.

3rd Prelude.—Grant me grace, O Jesus, to possess a lively faith and unbounded confidence in Thy power and goodness.

1st Point.—Consider the persons.

Beyond the Jordan, our Lord accompanied by His disciples. At Bethania, Lazarus sick, and his sisters in affliction. On the road, some persons going to inform our divine Lord that he whom He loveth is sick. He is not ignorant of it. The Heart of Jesus watches over His own who are far off, as well as over those who are near to Him; but sometimes He tries them, that He may perfect their virtue. O my good Master! cause me to profit both by Thy trials and Thy favours, since both are alike an effect of Thy love.

2nd and 3rd Points.—Listen to the words and consider the actions.

Martha and Mary said to Jesus: 'Lord, he whom Thou lovest is sick' (John xi. 3). They mention nothing more. 'He whom Thou lovest:' all their confidence is fixed in this. . . . They could, however, have added the motive of the love which Lazarus bore to Jesus, that of the hospitality they had so willingly given Him in Bethania; Martha could also have put forward her eagerness to serve so good a Master; Mary her love for Him. But no: true confidence leans on the goodness of Jesus alone: 'He whom Thou lovest is sick.' This is all the message that is sent. . . . Our Lord seems to pay no attention to it; He answers that this sickness is not unto death, but that God and His Son may be glorified by it. . . . Yet the malady increases; Jesus does not come. Lazarus dies, and is placed in the tomb. . . . What a trial for Martha and Mary! Their divine Lord had said that their brother should live, and he is dead. . . . Yet they cease not to believe in Him, to love Him, and to hope in Him, and their fidelity is soon to be rewarded. . . . Oh! if we could but understand the full depth of these words:

Hope in Jesus against all human hope. . . . Four days have already passed since Lazarus was consigned to the tomb; a great number of Jews assemble in the house of the deceased, and endeavour to console Martha and Mary . . . but the divine and real Consoler is drawing near; He is announced: Martha rises up and goes to meet Him: 'Lord,' she exclaims, 'if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. But now I also know that whatsoever Thou wilt ask of God, God will give it Thee' (John xi. 21, 22). Imperfect faith and confidence, which would make the miracles of our Saviour's divine power depend on His corporal presence! But the Sacred Heart of Jesus overlooks these human miseries. . . . 'Thy brother shall rise again,' He says to Martha. . . . 'I know,' she replies, 'that he shall rise again, in the resurrection at the last day' (John xi. 23, 24). She has not comprehended the words of Jesus; He speaks again to her in these admirable words: 'I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in Me, although he be dead, shall live:' that is to say, he shall come to life again (John xi. 25). . . . 'Believest thou this?' (John xi. 26). Martha replies that she does believe, and leaving Jesus, hastens to her sister. 'The Master is come,' she says, 'and calleth for thee' (John xi. 28); from which it may be inferred that Jesus had really asked after her. What touching familiarity! Mary goes out at the moment, and seeing Jesus, she falls at His feet, and addresses Him in the same words her sister had used: 'Lord, if Thou hadst been here my brother had not died' (John xi. 21). 'Where have you laid him?' (John xi. 34) Jesus asks: moved to see all around Him in tears. . . . 'Lord, come and see. . . . And Jesus wept' (John xi. 34, 35). Why dost Thou weep, adorable Lord? Ah! Thou lovedst Lazarus, Thou lovest his sisters, and the assembled Jews attribute to this fact the cause of Thy tears: 'Behold how He loved him,' they said (John xi. 36). Yet there is some mystery concealed here; for why these tears, since Lazarus

is to rise again, and joy come forth anew in Bethania? It is not, therefore, for one single dead man that Jesus weeps, but for all those who have already gone down into hell, and for those who will still go there. Good Jesus, this it is which causes Thee to be troubled and to weep. . . . Ought not such great pity for our miseries cause us to fall down at Thy feet, and solicit our pardon from Thy Sacred Heart with the most lively confidence! . . . It costs so little to this all-powerful God to work the greatest miracles. . . . 'Take away the stone' (John xi. 39), He says. . . . There is nothing there now but a corpse. No matter. The work of corruption has commenced. No matter again. He has been in the grave four days. It matters nothing: 'Did I not say to thee, that if thou believe thou shalt see the glory of God' (John xi. 40), as well as the most astounding of miracles? . . . 'Then Jesus cried out with a loud voice: Lazarus, come forth' (John xi. 43). . . . And immediately the dead man arises, he is unbound, he walks, and places himself at once at table by the side of Jesus. . . . It is thus, O my God, that Thy glory shines forth in the miracles which Thou grantest to faith and confidence.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us adore Him as our God, Whose power equals His goodness. Let us beg of Him to enliven our faith, to perfect our hope, and thus to place us in dispositions to obtain from Him the most signal favours. Let us expose to Him the wants of our soul, and ask Him with confidence for all the graces of which we stand in need.

Resolution.—To have recourse to Jesus in our difficulties and trials with great faith and confidence.

Offering of the Resolution, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—'If thou believe, thou shalt see the glory of God' (John xi. 40). 'I am the resurrection and the life' (John xi. 25).

Prayer.—Pater Noster.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CXLVIII.

COUNCIL OF THE PRINCES OF THE PRIESTS AND PHARISEES.

'The chief priests, therefore, and the Pharisees gathered a council, and said: What do we, for this man doth many miracles? If we let Him alone so, all will believe in Him . . One of them, named Caiphas, being the High-Priest that year, said to them: You know nothing. Neither do you consider that it is expedient for you that one man should die for the people . . . From that day, therefore, they devised to put Him to death.'—JOHN xi. 47-53.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—Represent to yourself the council hall where the princes, the priests and the Pharisees are assembled; and behold God also, a witness from the highest heavens of what is going on there.

2*nd Prelude.*—Give me grace, O Lord, ever to have an upright heart in Thy divine presence, and to trust in Thee alone.

1*st Point.*—The results of the graces which God grants us depend on our dispositions.

The resurrection of Lazarus has diffused a pure joy in the house at Bethania; it has confirmed the faith of the disciples and converted several; why, then, do the princes of the priests and the Pharisees take occasion from it to become still more hardened, and form the resolution which will soon render them guilty of the most enormous crime that has ever been committed? It is because their hearts were evil; the works of our Lord did not produce the same effects on all who witnessed them; upright souls found in them an abundant source of light and grace, but those whose hearts were corrupted and blinded by passion, only discovered in them additional food for their malice, and an occasion for fresh sins. God causes His truth to shine before the eyes of all; offers salvation to all, and the means of securing it; those who wish to profit by these

do so; those who wish to set it aside, do so; and those who wish to reject it, do so . . . O my God, what has been my conduct up to the present? What fruit have I reaped from the many instructions I have heard, from so many interior inspirations, so much good example, so many sacraments received, so many graces conferred on me? These ought to have made me a saint, and perhaps they have only served to render me more guilty by increasing the number of my infidelities . . . O my God, Thou dost not will that I should be discouraged, but rather that I open my eyes to the truth, and change my conduct; I now make the resolution to do so: O Lord, help me with Thy holy grace.

2nd Point.—The wickedness of men does not hinder the accomplishment of God's designs.

The princes of the priests and the Pharisees, after a short deliberation, agreed together to put Jesus Christ to death. Such is the result of this iniquitous council, such the fruits of their prolonged obduracy; but how greatly are the counsels of our Lord exalted above all human devices! The envenomed hatred of the enemies of Jesus Christ will injure no one but themselves; they wish to destroy this divine Saviour, but they will only lose their own souls; for our Lord will make use of their malice to consummate the work of our Redemption, and to procure for Jesus that infinite glory by which His Passion and Death will be followed. Let us, then, adore the depth of the infinitely wise counsels of the Lord, and learn from thence what ought to be our confidence in this all-powerful God, Who knows how to draw good from evil, and Who directs all for the advantage of those who wish to be faithful to Him. O my God, I place myself in Thy hands. All who hope in Thee shall never be confounded, and no creature can injure those whom Thou dost guard with Thy protection.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us thank Him for having consented to become for us the victim of a hatred, the

plots inspired by which He knows well. Let us pray to Him to attach us inviolably to Himself, and to preserve us from sin, the only evil we have to dread. Let us abandon ourselves with confidence to His guidance, accepting willingly all that He shall permit creatures to do against us. Let us ask Him for the graces necessary to remain always faithful to Him.

Resolutions.—To behold God in all our trials, and to receive them from His hand with submission.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—'To them that love God, all things work together unto good' (Rom. viii. 28).

Prayer.—Receive, O Lord, etc., page 43.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CXLIX.

JESUS GOES UP TO JERUSALEM.

'And it came to pass, when the days of His assumption were accomplishing, that He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem.'—LUKE ix. 51.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—Image to yourself the road from Bethania to Jerusalem, which our divine Lord enters so resolutely.

2*nd Prelude.*—Grant me grace, O Lord, to be prompt and generous in carrying out all Thou shalt demand of me.

1*st Point.*—Jesus has loved us even to delivering Himself up to death for us; hence, in order to testify our love for Him we must labour to overcome ourselves.

'And it came to pass, when the days of His assumption were accomplishing, that He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem' (Luke ix. 51). Our Lord was not ignorant

of the conspiracy which the princes of the priests and the Pharisees had formed against His life. He knew, moreover, what would be the result thereof. He beheld the moment of His death approach, and He foresaw the dreadful torments which would accompany it; yet He boldly faces all, and goes to Jerusalem, which was in a few days to become the theatre of His ignominies and sufferings. Behold to what an excess my Saviour has loved me; if I wish in my turn to prove my love for Him, I ought to make, with the like generosity, the sacrifices His adorable Heart expects from me. Can these sacrifices be compared to those He makes for me at this moment? He wishes me to bear slight injuries, and He abandons Himself to insults and ignominies from a host of enemies. He wishes me to endure little contradictions patiently, and to accept with resignation trifling sufferings; and He goes forth to meet the most frightful torments. O my Jesus! what confusion ought to be mine, when I consider how much Thou hast done for me, and how little Thou dost ask me to do for Thee! If I still refuse Thee the little Thou dost ask of me, what can I think of myself?

2nd Point.—It is to our own interest to show ourselves generous in the service of Jesus.

We do not know the precious advantages which result from generosity in the service of Jesus Christ; we forget that this divine Saviour, being power and goodness itself, indemnifies a hundredfold for their efforts and sacrifices those souls who are faithful to Him. Oh, how many graces we deprive ourselves of, when we yield to our repugnances and cowardice! A victory gained over ourselves would unite us to the Sacred Heart of our divine Master; we should then receive from Him renewed strength to return to the combat, and a holy joy which would render it easier unto us; then would Jesus enlighten our soul as to the value of sufferings and humiliations. He would inflame our ardour, would increase His holy love within us, and would cause us to

taste interior delights infinitely more desirable than all the enjoyments we could find in yielding to our inclinations. O my Saviour! Thou didst merit for me the grace to overcome myself, when Thou didst go forth with so much courage to meet the torments and death which awaited Thee in Jerusalem; grant me, then, that grace which Thou didst merit for me: I promise Thee to make the necessary efforts to profit fully by it.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us thank Him with all our heart for having made the sacrifice of His life so liberally for us. Let us humble ourselves profoundly for having had so little love for Him, and so little generosity in His service, after the touching and strong proofs of the love He has shown for us. Let us ask pardon for our numberless infidelities, making a resolution to show ourselves in future more fervent and more generous, and praying Him to bless our good-will.

Resolution.—To overcome ourselves generously where it will cost us the most.

Offering of the Resolution, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—Jesus Christ has loved me even to dying for me; should I not love Him sufficiently to do what He asks of me? 'Behold, I come to do Thy Will, O my God' (Ps. xxxix. 29).

Prayer.—Receive O Lord, etc., page 43.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CL.

JESUS REPROVES THE BITTER ZEAL OF JAMES AND JOHN.

'And He sent messengers before His face,' (and, going, they entered into a city of the Samaritans) '. . . And they received Him not . . . And when His disciples, James and John, had seen this, they said: Lord, wilt Thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them? And He rebuked them, saying: You know not of what spirit you are. The Son of Man came not to destroy souls, but to save.'—LUKE ix. 52-56.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—As before, page 119.

2*nd Prelude.*—Divine Jesus, replenish me with Thy Spirit, which is a spirit of meekness and mercy.

1*st Point.*—Jesus bears with sinners kindly.

'You know not of what spirit you are' (Luke ix. 55).

The spirit of our divine Lord is a spirit of peace, kindness, and meekness. He waits patiently for sinners, bears with and turns away from their offences, overwhelms them with benefits, in order to gain them, to save them, and make them happy. Am I penetrated with this divine spirit? Does not the spirit of harshness and intolerance, so natural to the children of Adam, pervade me? Two apostles wish to call down fire from heaven on a guilty city, but it is because the Holy Ghost had not yet come down upon them; I ought to be replenished with this adorable spirit—I have received all the sacraments which confer it. What excuse can I allege if I am devoid of mercy, without forbearance and charity towards others? Now, O my Jesus, nothing can justify me before Thee; and is not this what I wish for? In laying before Thee my misery, I desire but to excite Thy pity, and to obtain from Thy infinite goodness all the virtues which I need.

2*nd Point.*—Jesus labours for the salvation of sinners with indefatigable zeal.

'The Son of Man came not to destroy souls, but to save' (Luke ix. 56).

Jesus is not satisfied to bear with sinners, and to disregard their offences: He loves them, He suffers for them, overwhelms them with His graces, and uses every effort to procure their salvation. He only came down from heaven to save mankind; if, then, we wish to be truly His disciples, and to possess His Spirit, we must imitate His zeal for the happiness and salvation of souls. I desire, O my Jesus, with all my heart to enter into the designs of Thy infinite mercy, but I cannot possess of myself the pure zeal with which Thou dost desire to see me filled, since I am but nothingness and sin. I will, then, come to Thee; Thy adorable Heart is an ocean of goodness, which overflows from all parts, in order to diffuse on us Its plenitude; I will approach It by humility, by prayer and holy desires, and I dare to hope that I shall be laden with Its gifts. Then I will imitate and show Thy love for poor sinners, and will use all my efforts to hinder them from falling into eternal fire.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us offer Him our homage of adoration and love. Let us beg of Him to replenish us with His Spirit, inspiring us with sentiments of zeal and compassion for sinners. Let us ask Him for the grace to draw from His Sacred Heart all the virtues we stand in need of.

Resolutions.—To bear with others kindly. To procure the salvation of sinners according to our power.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—'The Son of Man came not to destroy souls, but to save' (Luke ix. 56).

Prayer.—Soul of Christ, etc., page 4.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CLI.

JESUS FORETELLS HIS PASSION TO HIS DISCIPLES.

'And taking again the twelve, He began to tell them the things that should befall Him; saying: Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man shall be betrayed to the chief priests, and to the Scribes and ancients, and they shall condemn Him to death, and shall deliver Him to the Gentiles. And they shall mock Him, and spit on Him, and scourge Him; and the third day He shall rise again.'—MARK x. 32, seq.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude*, page 119.

2*nd Prelude.*—Divine Jesus, grant me grace to love Thee perfectly. I beg this of Thee in the name of all the love Thou dost deign to have for me.

1*st Point.*—It is through love that Jesus sacrifices His life.

Let us try to penetrate into the Sacred Heart of our divine Lord, there to study His dispositions, His sentiments, and the virtues which He practises at this moment. When going forward to meet death, He predicts to His apostles all the details of His sufferings and ignominies. The Sacred Heart of Jesus is full of ardent zeal for the glory of His Father and the salvation of the world. This zeal, which has never ceased to go on increasing during His life, has now reached its climax; and like the sun, which has attained to the fulness of its course, it causes all who approach it to experience its penetrating force. Let us then draw near to this adorable Saviour; He alone can deliver our soul from the mortal languor which chills and paralyzes all its faculties. Let us ask Him to reveal to us, as He did to His apostles, the greatness and the number of the torments He is soon to endure for our salvation. Let us behold Him walking before us, and going forward with ardour to meet death, and then let us blush at our own cowardice in His service. O my Jesus, how long shall I defer to make generously to Thee the sacrifice of

all that displeases Thee in me? How long shall I will and not will? Ah! I implore of Thee to put a stop to these prolonged alternations of generosity and tepidity, of courage and cowardice. May Thy holy love raise me above my own weakness, arrest my inconstancy, and cause me to walk henceforth with a firm step in the holy paths of Calvary, wherein Thou dost call me to follow Thee.

2nd Point.—It is because we do not love Jesus sufficiently that we are so weak and inconstant in His service.

We love our divine Lord, we desire to profit by His graces, and to prove to Him our gratitude; why, then, do we often fall so easily, and forget so quickly the good resolutions we have made? It is because our love for Jesus, though real, is as yet too weak; it is because we have not sufficiently studied the characters of true love in His adorable Heart. 'Jesus has loved me,' says the apostle, 'and delivered Himself up for me' (Gal. ii. 20). Our divine Lord, in the Holy Scripture, speaking of His heavenly Father, says: 'God so loved the world as to give His only begotten Son' (John iii. 16). To deliver up and give one's self; to consecrate and give all that we have most dear, are the proofs of true love; to give and consecrate myself, with all that I love most, is then what I ought to do, if I wish my heart to belong entirely to Jesus. Up to the present, have I done this? My adorable Lord opens to me the immense treasures of His grace and His love, but I can only enrich myself with His gifts by divesting myself of all affection to created things, to self-attachment, and to the seeking after those things which flatter me. O my Jesus, Thou art my only and sovereign good; how blind is my heart!—it knows not the emptiness of all that is not Thee, nor the ineffable treasures of which Thou art the Source. Discover to me, O Lord, Thy infinite perfections; break the earthly ties which bind me captive, and I will offer Thee my homage of praise, by giving myself entirely to Thee.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us offer Him our homage of adoration and gratitude. Let us beg of Him to open His divine Heart unto us, and to teach us to read therein the characters of true love. Let us ask His grace to love Him perfectly, and consecrate ourselves entirely to Him.

Resolution.—To carry out generously to-day all that Jesus shall ask of us by the interior inspirations of His grace.

Offering of the Resolution, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—'My heart is ready, O Lord' (Ps. lvi. 8.) 'What wilt Thou have me to do?' (Acts ix. 6).

Prayer.—Receive, O Lord, etc., page 43.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CLII.

REQUEST OF JAMES AND JOHN; THE ANSWER OF JESUS.

'James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to Jesus, saying: Lord, grant to us that we may sit, one on Thy right hand and the other on Thy left hand in Thy glory. And Jesus said to them: You know not what you ask. Can you drink of the chalice that I drink of?'—MARK x. 35-38.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude*, page 119.

2*nd Prelude.*—My divine Lord, grant me grace never to have any ambition but that of growing unceasingly in Thy love.

1*st Point.*—We can only attain the glory of heaven through the sufferings of this life.

'You know not what you ask' (Mark x. 38). Jesus had been speaking to His apostles of the sufferings and death which He is about to undergo, and the apostles are only occupied with ambitious thoughts; they have understood nothing of the discourse of their divine Master, except that it concerns an important event; they conclude that

the triumph of the Messias is not far off, and their ambition is aroused, for they believe that His reign is to be a temporal one. It is thus that we fail to understand when we allow ourselves to be overcome by earthly desires. O my Jesus! how often does it not happen to me to fall into illusions not less preposterous! I desire the treasures of heaven, but I would wish to reach them without renouncing the enjoyments of life; I wish to be united to Thee without leaving myself; I wish to acquire virtues, but without combating my defects. O my Saviour, how many miseries do I not possess! Vouchsafe to have mercy on me, place me in the way of truth, teach me what ought to be the object of my desires, what I ought to ask of Thee, and above all what I ought to do to acquire true glory and perfect happiness.

2nd Point.—The sufferings of this life become meritorious and easy to bear when we love Jesus.

'Can you drink of the chalice that I drink of?' (Mark x. 38). If we wish to be glorified with Jesus, we must suffer with Jesus. Our divine Saviour did not enter into His glory until He had entirely drained the bitter chalice which His Father's justice had prepared for Him, and it is useless for us to flatter ourselves that we can enter heaven by any other means. We must suffer; this truth is hard if we regard it by itself, but how sweet it may become if we consider that suffering is the chalice of Jesus; that it is His hand which presents it to us, His Sacred Heart which invites us to accept it; that He drank of it Himself before offering it to us; that He has in some sort deprived it of its bitterness, since the unction of His grace has mingled with it, in the case of generous souls, the sweetness of His holy love. O my divine Jesus, never then, permit me to be so ungrateful as to thrust from my lips the chalice which Thou dost offer me; grant that I may accept it through love, and that, filled with confidence in Thy all-powerful help, I may say with Thy two disciples: Yes, Lord, I can and will drink of Thy chalice;

I can and will be baptized with the same baptism with which Thou wast baptized.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us adore Him lovingly, as our God and Saviour, and thank Him for all the sufferings He has deigned to accept for our salvation. Let us ask Him for grace to judge of all things according to His Spirit, and to direct our ambition towards objects worthy of exciting it. Let us humble ourselves for the little fidelity we have had up to the present in accepting the bitterness of His chalice. Let us ask Him for the grace to love and accept, for His sake, all the tribulations which are meant to make us participators of His sufferings and merits.

Resolution.—To suffer for the love of Jesus whatever trials we may have to bear to-day.

Offering of the Resolution, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—In order to be glorified with Jesus, we must suffer with Jesus.

Prayer.—Soul of Christ, etc., page 4.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CLIII.

THE DOCTRINE OF JESUS CHRIST ON THE USE TO BE MADE OF AUTHORITY.

'And the ten (apostles), hearing it, began to be much displeased at James and John. But Jesus, calling them, saith to them: You know that they who seem to rule over the Gentiles, lord it over them; and their princes have power over them. But it is not so among you; but whosoever will be greater, shall be your minister. And whosoever will be first among you, shall be the servant of all. For the Son of Man also is not come to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a redemption for many.'—MARK x. 41-45.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude*, page 119.

2nd Prelude.—My divine Lord, grant me grace to imitate Thy example by devoting myself generously to procure the salvation of all those I may be placed over.

1st Point.—Jesus did not come down from heaven to exact our adoration and homage, but to procure our salvation.

'The Son of Man is not come to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a redemption for many' (Mark x. 45). Jesus, the only Son of God, possessed in heaven equal glory with His Father; the angels prostrated with respect before His Majesty. When He deigned to appear on earth, clothed with mortal flesh, He did not cease to be worthy of the adoration of all creatures; He could justly have exacted from us all the honour in our power to render Him, yet He did not do so. Far from occupying in the midst of us the supreme rank which was His due, He humbles and annihilates Himself, even to submitting to His creatures, obeying them, and lavishing on them the most watchful and charitable care. O my Jesus, it is Thy title of Saviour which discovers to us the reason of such conduct. It is not for Thy own sake but for ours Thou hast come down from heaven. Thou art our good Pastor and tender Father. Our happiness and our salvation is all that Thou dost seek; glory, repose, life itself, Thou dost sacrifice lovingly for us miserable sinners, whom Thou wouldst save. It is thus Thou dost reign over us, O divine King! Why, then, do not all creatures hasten to enrol themselves under Thy amiable standard? Why do not all creatures esteem themselves supremely happy to have Thee for their sovereign? Ah! it is because they do not know Thee! Make Thyself known, then, O Lord; manifest to all mankind the infinite goodness of Thy divine Heart; but above all make Thyself known unto me, discover to my soul the depth of Thy immense charity, and give me grace to attach myself inviolably to Thee through gratitude and love.

2nd Point.—After the example of Jesus, we ought only to employ our authority to ensure the salvation of those we are placed over.

'Whosoever will be first among you shall be the servant of all' (Mark x. 44). According to our Lord's words, the superior is not to be ministered unto, but to minister, that is to say, with a father's kindness to care for all who are under him; to watch over them, and procure their salvation with a zeal and charity not to be discouraged; to use, as may be required, meekness, firmness and prudence; to be all to all, and if necessary to sacrifice for their sakes rest, comfort, health, and life itself. It is thus Jesus has acted, this is what the saints have practised after His example, and it is what all those are bound to practise whom divine Providence has invested with authority. O my divine Saviour, replenish me with Thy spirit, inspire me with those sentiments of zeal and that pure charity which distinguished Thy true disciples; may I be towards those under me Thy living image, and the instrument of Thy goodness.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us adore Him as the Master and Model of perfect charity. Let us beg of Him to teach us how He wishes us to practise this precious virtue. Let us ask His pardon for all those faults which selfishness, pride, and all other vices contrary to charity have caused us to commit. Let us make a firm resolution henceforth to imitate the charity of His adorable Heart, asking of Him the necessary graces for this end.

Resolutions.—To treat those who are under us kindly, and to watch over them with care.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—'The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister' (Mark x. 45).

Prayer.—Soul of Christ, etc., page 4.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

CONTEMPLATION CLIV.

CURE OF THE BLIND MAN OF JERICHO.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—'As Jesus went out of Jericho with His disciples and a very great multitude, a blind man sat by the way-side begging. Who when he had heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, began to cry out and to say, Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me . . . And Jesus, standing still, commanded him to be called. And Jesus said to him, What wilt thou that I do to thee? And the blind man said, Lord, that I may see; and Jesus said to him, Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole. And immediately he saw' (Mark x. 46-52).

2*nd Prelude.*—Represent to yourself the road leading to Jericho.

3*rd Prelude.*—Grant me grace, O Lord, always to pray to Thee with a lively faith and sincere desire to be heard.

1*st Point.*—Consider the persons.

Jesus, our adorable Master, Who possesses at all times the power and will to do good . . . He is followed by His apostles and a great crowd . . . A blind man is sitting by the way-side; he is poor, and repulsed by everyone; he lives on alms; he feels his poverty and blindness keenly; he desires ardently to be freed from them. What claims are these to the goodness of Jesus! Ah! if this divine Lord recognised in me a similar knowledge of my miseries, and an equally earnest desire to be cured of them, how efficacious would be all my prayers!

2*nd and* 3*rd Points.*—Listen to the words and consider the actions.

Jesus is accompanied by a large crowd; the blind man, who hears the noise, asks what it is, and learns that Jesus is passing by. What a precious opportunity!

This man, full of faith, feels the hope of a miraculous cure spring up in his heart; he is only a poor beggar unnoticed by all, but he has heard that Jesus testifies great kindness for the poor, and he ventures to ask a miracle of Him; without losing time in deliberating, he cries out aloud: 'Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me' (Mark x. 47). Several of those in the crowd, finding him troublesome, try to impose silence on him, but he cries out all the louder: 'Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!' Jesus distinguishes his voice, which is addressed to Himself alone; He commands that the blind man be led to Him. They go to fetch him . . . 'Arise,' they say to him . . . 'He calleth thee' (Mark x. 49). Oh, what a moment of hope and expectation for this poor blind man! He is led through the crowd, his heart agitated by a thousand different feelings—he is in the presence of Jesus. 'What wilt thou that I should do for thee?' asks this kind Master. 'Lord,' he replies, 'that I may see' (Mark x. 51). And Jesus grants his request immediately, and adds to the grace demanded a thousand others not asked for, but more precious still, for He says: 'Thy faith hath made thee whole' (Mark x. 52); and this man, justified through the grace of his Saviour and full of holy joy, went his way praising God with a loud voice for all the wonders He had worked in his favour. O Jesus, it is sufficient to draw near to Thee to be overwhelmed with Thy benefits; and in order to draw near to Thee we have but to ask it of Thee. Ah! do not suffer me to languish any longer in my spiritual infirmities, possessing as I do so easy and so sweet a means of being delivered from them; cure me, O Lord, of my blindness, and of the other miseries of my soul, and grant that I may glorify Thy holy name by my gratitude and love.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us adore Him as our Saviour, full of kindness and mercy. Let us produce several acts of the most lively confidence in His power and goodness. Let us beg of Him to give us an acute feeling of our in-

terior miseries, and to inspire us with the desire of being freed from them, asking earnestly for all the graces we stand in need of.

Resolution.—To say our prayers with a great deal of faith, fervour, and confidence.

Offering of the Resolution, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—Jesus, my Saviour and my God, have mercy on me!

Prayer.—Soul of Christ, etc., page 4.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CLV.

THE SAME SUBJECT.

'A blind man sat by the way-side begging, who, when he had heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, began to cry out, and to say: Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me! . . . And, standing still, Jesus commanded him to be called. . . . And He said to him: What wilt thou that I do to thee? And the blind man said to Him: Lord, that I may see! And Jesus saith to him: Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole. And immediately he saw.'—MARK x. 46-52.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—Represent to yourself again the road to Jericho. Behold Jesus there, and the blind man He is about to cure.

2*nd Prelude.*—Divine Jesus, enlighten me with the light of Thy Spirit, which is a Spirit of truth and holiness.

1*st Point.*—The necessity of drawing near to Jesus, that we may be enlightened.

'A blind man sat by the way-side begging' (Mark x. 46). Let us consider the state of this man before Jesus cured him: he was surrounded by the brightness of the sun, and yet plunged in profound darkness, and deprived of all the precious advantages conveyed by the sense of seeing. Is not this state mine? I live in the midst of a

pure light, since I have the happiness to belong to the one true Church, the sole depository of true faith; yet can I say that I rejoice in those interior lights which cause others to run with ease and with joy in the road to heaven? If I do not rejoice in them, what can be the real cause? Ah! it is because, like the blind man in the Gospel, I need Jesus to vouchsafe to call me to Him, and open the eyes of my soul Himself. This blind man had heard of Jesus Christ, but he did not know Him; he had never had the happiness to behold Him, to listen to His adorable voice, or to approach near enough to Him to experience the effects of His divine power. Is not this wanting in myself? I know Jesus by faith, but have I sufficiently contemplated Him with the eyes of my soul to know thoroughly His divine perfections? Have I listened to the sacred words which He has vouchsafed to speak to me interiorly? Have I sought to draw near to Him in order to experience His goodness and power in curing the maladies of my soul? O my Jesus! if the blind man of Jericho knew Thee not, it was because he had not had it in his power to know Thee; I cannot make the like excuse for myself. O God, infinitely amiable, pardon my want of eagerness to draw near to Thee! touch my heart with a true desire of knowing Thee; grant that, seeking Thee in future with unceasing fervour, I may deserve to find Thee, and to be for ever inseparably united to Thee.

2nd Point.—By what means can we draw near to Jesus?

What are the means we must use to draw near to Jesus? The blind man of Jericho indicates them to us by his conduct. He desires earnestly to be cured of his infirmity; he believes and hopes in Jesus. We ought to endeavour to implant the same dispositions in ourselves. To hope and desire he joins a prayer full of humility and fervour, which is the second means of drawing near to Jesus. Our divine Master deigns to listen to him, calls him, and he hastens to go to Him. Jesus speaks to him and asks him what he desires; 'Lord, that I may see,' he

replies; and Jesus says, 'Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole.' O Jesus, light of the world! I come to Thee with the most entire confidence; I desire to be enlightened with Thy pure light, that I may know Thy perfections, Thy divine virtues, and all the dispositions of Thy Sacred Heart, in order to love Thee, to be united to Thee, and to imitate Thee perfectly: Lord, grant, then, that I may see; work within me this happy change, which cannot be my own work, nor that of any creature; transport me from the darkness of my ignorance, and from the illusions of my vices, to Thy divine light. If Thou wilt deign, O Lord, to grant me this grace, I can no longer help loving Thee, and with Thy love everything will be easy to me; do not, then, refuse it to me, O God of my Heart, my only hope is in Thee.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us adore Him as our God, our true Light, and only Hope. Let us beg of Him to make us feel acutely our need to be cured of our spiritual blindness. Let us frequently make to Him, with a lively faith and sincere desire of being heard, the prayer of the blind man of Jericho, 'Lord, grant that I may see' (Mark x. 51). If it be not light, but fidelity that we need, let us ask for the strength we require, and give ourselves to our divine Lord with entire generosity.

Resolution.—To follow faithfully the interior light of grace, that we may merit to have it increased within us.

Offering of the Resolution, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—'Lord, grant that I may see' (Mark x. 51).

Prayer.—Receive, O Lord, etc., page 43.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CLVI.

JESUS THE GUEST OF ZACHEUS.

'There was a man named Zacheus, who was the chief of the publicans, and he was rich. And he sought to see Jesus; and he could not for the crowd, because he was low of stature. And, running before, he climbed up into a sycamore-tree, that he might see Him, for He was to pass that way. And when Jesus was come to the place, looking up, He saw him, and said to him: Zacheus, make haste and come down, for this day I must abide in thy house.'—LUKE xix. 2-5.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—Represent to yourself the entrance to the city of Jericho, and the sycamore-tree into which Zacheus climbed.

2*nd Prelude.*—Grant, O Jesus, that, carefully putting to profit all Thy graces, I may prove to Thee my gratitude by my fervour and fidelity.

1*st Point.*—The goodness of Jesus towards Zacheus.

Let us consider attentively all the actions of our adorable Lord, and try to comprehend the gentleness, the goodness, and generosity of His divine Heart towards all those who seek to draw nigh unto Him. Zacheus did not know Him, he had only heard wonders related of Him; yet, hearing He was about to pass through Jericho, he ran to see Him: but not being able to do so on account of the crowd, for he was low in stature, he climbed up into a sycamore-tree. The extent of his desire was to behold Jesus at the moment He should pass by Him, but it was not enough for the loving Heart of Jesus to grant him momentary satisfaction as the recompense for his earnestness in seeking Him. He raises His eyes, looks at him, and calls him by his name, saying to him, 'Zacheus, make haste and come down, for this day I must abide in thy house' (Luke xix. 5). And why must it be so, adorable Saviour? Thou dost tell us why Thyself: it is because Zacheus is a true son of Abraham by the liveliness of his

faith and the ardour of his holy desires; it is because Thou canst not prevent Thyself from diffusing Thy graces with profusion when Thou findest hearts prepared to receive them. O my good Master! grant that I may be aroused from my tepidity, and, seeking Thee with great fervour, may find Thee according to my desires.

2nd Point.—The fidelity of Zacheus to the graces of Jesus.

As soon as Zacheus had heard the words that Jesus spoke to him, he hastened to his house, there to prepare all that was requisite to testify his respect, his gratitude, and the joy which he experienced to entertain Him; but, not content with these first proofs of his love for Him, he added to them the promise of giving to the poor the half of his possessions; and if anyone had suffered any injury from him, to give him four times as much. A soul penetrated with gratitude towards Jesus never thinks enough has been done for Him; offering is added to offering, sacrifice to sacrifice, with unmeasured fervour. Do I imitate this conduct—I, who have received from Jesus such great and numberless benefits? O my adorable Saviour, why do I possess so little gratitude, after having received so many graces? Why am I so negligent in Thy service, so wanting in generosity to overcome myself, so little moved with the desire of pleasing Thee and growing in Thy love? Ah! I beg of Thee, have pity on my insensibility; force my heart to give itself to Thee, pursue it, snatch from it all that occupies it, attaches it, and prevents it from loving Thee, and deign to gain over it a complete victory. O Jesus! I give Thee not only the half of my goods, but my heart, my entire being, all that I am, and all that I possess; receive all, and give me in exchange Thy divine love. If I possess this, I shall be rich enough, and ask for nothing more.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us offer Him our homage of adoration and love. Let us thank Him for the numberless graces by which He has prevented and overwhelmed us. Let us ask of Him that gratitude which will lead us to make generously every sacrifice He shall please to ask

of us, and that we may serve Him through love all the days of our life.

Resolution.— To make to Jesus some sacrifice to-day, with a view of proving our gratitude to Him.

Offering of the Resolution, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—'What shall I render to the Lord for all His gifts to me?' (Ps. cxv. 12).

Prayer.—Receive, O Lord, etc., page 43.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

CONTEMPLATION CLVII.

THE SAME SUBJECT.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—'There was a man named Zacheus, who was the chief of the publicans, and he was rich. And he sought to see Jesus, and he could not, for the crowd, because he was low of stature. And running before, he climbed up into a sycamore-tree, that he might see Him, for He was to pass that way. And when Jesus was come to the place, looking up, He saw him, and said to him: Zacheus, make haste and come down, for this day I must abide in thy house' (Luke xix. 2-5).

2*nd Prelude.*—Represent to yourself the road to Jericho, and the tree which Zacheus has climbed, then the house of the chief of the publicans.

3*rd Prelude.*—Grant me grace, O Lord, to imitate the fervour, the generosity, and gratitude of Zacheus.

1*st Point.*—Consider the persons.

Our adorable Lord, Who is walking along surrounded by a numberless crowd. What majesty and dignity, but at the same time what gentleness, in His countenance and deportment! His infinite goodness is manifested in His exterior. . . . O my divine Jesus, how can I behold Thee without experiencing a sweet confidence in Thee?

And how can I know Thee without loving Thee? . . . In the crowd are to be found just persons who love Jesus, converted sinners who have turned their hearts to Him, and hypocrites who love Him not, because they are full of pride and resist His grace. . . . But behold: a publican, a sinner, or one who passes for such, runs forward and hastens to mount a sycamore-tree. Why so much eagerness? The reason is because his heart is touched by a secret unction; he desires to know this adorable Saviour, of whom he has heard such wonders related; he will not let so good an opportunity of seeing Him escape him. O! my Jesus if I possessed the like ardour to profit by all the means of salvation Thou dost offer me, and above all by the visits Thou dost deign to make to my soul in Holy Communion, what graces I should receive!

2nd and 3rd Points.—Listen to the words and consider the actions.

Jesus draws near to the city; the crowd is very great; who thinks of Zacheus? . . . No one except Him from Whom nothing is hidden, and Who observes, above all, whatever is done for His love. Arrived at the place where the publican was, Jesus raises His eyes, looks at Zacheus, and calls him. What must have passed in the soul of Zacheus at that moment? What sentiments of joy, of humility, love, and gratitude! . . . He hastens to come down, and runs to prepare what is necessary to receive Jesus. O my Jesus! how much his fervour fills me with confusion! . . . At this the Pharisees murmur; they are indignant that Jesus should lodge in the house of a sinner. . . Let us, however, listen to the language of this converted sinner. Lord, he exclaims, I am unworthy of the favour Thou dost grant me to-day; I am penetrated with gratitude for it. Let everyone then listen to the promise I this day make: from this moment 'I give half my goods to the poor; and if I have wronged any man of anything, I restore him fourfold' (Luke xix. 8) of that which he has lost. Happy Zacheus! How amply thou

art about to be recompensed for the sacrifices thy generosity inspires thee to make! . . . And Jesus said to him, 'This day is salvation come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham; for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost' (Luke xix. 9, 10), and to give to converted sinners the privileges of the just. . . . Let us contemplate at leisure all that offers itself at this moment to our view: the goodness and love of Jesus, the happiness and gratitude of Zacheus, who has this day received salvation. . . O Jesus! wherever Thou art, hope and holy joy must reign; fear and sadness must be banished from a heart Thou dost honour with Thy visit. Ah! may mine appreciate the value of such a favour, and may it always be prepared with redoubled fervour to receive Thee in Holy Communion.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us thank Him for the goodness with which He has deigned so many times to come into our heart. Let us ask pardon for our coldness, and for the little we have done to requite so great a favour. Let us give Him our heart, and make a firm resolution at His feet never more to refuse aught to His love.

Resolution.—To prove our gratitude to Jesus, by showing ourselves generous in His service.

Offering of the Resolution, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—My heart is ready, O Lord; deign to visit it.

Prayer.—Receive, O Lord, etc., page 43.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CLVIII.

MAGDALEN ANOINTS THE FEET OF JESUS WITH A PRECIOUS PERFUME.

'Jesus therefore, six days before the Pasch, came to Bethania, where Lazarus had been dead, whom Jesus raised to life. And they made Him a supper there; and Martha served, but Lazarus was one of them that were at table with Him. Mary, therefore, took a pound of ointment of right spikenard, of great price, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair; and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment.'—JOHN xii. 1, 2, 3.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—Image to yourself the interior of the house inhabited by Lazarus, Martha, and Mary.

2*nd Prelude.*—Adorable Jesus, grant me grace to imitate the ardent love of Magdalen, and her anxiety to please Thee.

1*st Point.*—With what holy dispositions Magdalen anoints the feet of Jesus with the precious ointment!

Mary Magdalen loved our divine Lord ardently; the pardon which He had granted her with so much mercy, the marks of goodness which she had received from Him on so many occasions, the secret blessing of the resurrection of her brother, were for ever present to her, and penetrated her with the most lively and profound gratitude towards Him. What joy for her when she saw that her divine Saviour deigned once again to accept the invitation given Him by His friends in Bethania. What eagerness to do Him honour, and to lavish on Him all the care due to such a guest! Let us behold her pouring the precious perfume on His adorable feet, covering them with her kisses, wiping them with her hair, and sparing nothing to show her divine Master how happy she felt to be able to give Him some marks of her ardent affection. Such ought to be my dispositions, O my adorable Saviour, when Thou dost

deign, not to come into my house, but into my heart in Holy Communion. Can I render to myself the consoling testimony that I neglect nothing at that time to entertain Thee worthily? . . . O my Jesus, forgive my past coldness and negligence; grant that henceforth I may be entirely Thine, and that in those precious moments all may unite within me in offering Thee the homage so justly Thy due.

2nd Point.—The kindness with which Jesus accepts this proof of the affection of Magdalen.

The adorable Heart of Jesus is full of love for all mankind; but He cherishes with a special love those who endeavour to offer Him proofs of their respect and affection. With what goodness does He not accept of what Magdalen does to honour Him! with what precious favours does He not repay her offering, which was agreeable to Him, chiefly, because it was performed with an earnest desire of pleasing Him. It is thus that this divine Master deigns to fix His eyes on me, and enrich me with His most abundant gifts, if He behold within me that generosity which gives all that can be given and does all that can be done, because all is performed through a true love for Him. O Sacred Heart of my Jesus! if I knew Thee well, could I love Thee so little, serve Thee so badly, or make so many reserves in what I wish to do for Thee? What other object is there more worthy than Thee of my affections? Art Thou not my Benefactor, my Saviour, and the most amiable of all Masters? Grant, then, that I may know Thee, O my sovereign Good! discover to me all Thy infinite perfections; then I can no longer refuse to love Thee, and prove this love by my ardour to serve and please Thee.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us unite our homage of adoration and love to that of Magdalen, praying Him to inspire us with similar dispositions to those of this lover of His divine Heart. Let us humble ourselves at His feet on account of our coldness, negligence, and want of generosity

in His service. Let us beg of Him to triumph over our heart by the power of His grace, and to possess it entirely.

Resolution.—Not to refuse anything to Jesus which He shall ask of us by the interior voice of His grace.

Offering of the Resolution, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—Jesus accepts with goodness of all that is offered Him through love.

Prayer.—Receive, O Lord, etc., page 43.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

CONTEMPLATION CLIX.

THE SAME SUBJECT.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—'Jesus therefore, six days before the Pasch, came to Bethania, where Lazarus had been dead, whom Jesus raised to life. And they made Him a supper there; and Martha served, but Lazarus was one of them that were at table with Him. Mary, therefore, took a pound of ointment of right spikenard, of great price, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair; and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment' (John xii. 1, seq.).

2*nd Prelude.*—Represent to yourself again the interior of the house where Jesus is at table.

3*rd Prelude.*—Divine Jesus, grant me grace to love Thee with all my heart, and to prove my love to Thee by my actions.

1*st Point.*—Consider the persons.

Our adorable Lord; He is at table; what majesty and sweetness, what dignified modesty He exhibits! . . . The guests and Lazarus are there; joy is depicted on every countenance; Jesus is there . . . Martha serves . . . Mary is at the feet of Jesus . . . Judas looks dark and preoccupied . . . why does he not participate in the universal joy? . . . It is because avarice torments him; any one passion encouraged within us prevents us

from relishing the sweetness of the company of Jesus. O my divine Saviour, never permit me to deliver myself up to my passions!

2nd Point.—Listen to the words.

The guests discourse gently at table and without noise . . . from time to time they are silent to listen to Jesus . . . Magdalen speaks to Him from her heart; her mute language is understood by her divine Lord . . . but Judas murmurs in an undertone, saying: 'Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence and given to the poor? (John xii. 5). . . . 'And Jesus said, Let her alone' (John xii. 7). 'Amen, I say to you, wheresoever this Gospel shall be preached in the whole world, that also which she hath done shall be told for a memory of her' (Matt. xxvi. 13) . . . Happy Mary! thy heart must be very fervent, and thy intentions very pure, since on every occasion thy Saviour takes up thy defence against those who accuse thee . . . Oh! who will give me, after thy example, to seek in all that I do the approval of Jesus alone?

3rd Point.—Consider the actions.

What generosity in Magdalen! She pours out her precious perfume even to the last drop; and when she has entirely emptied the alabaster vase which contained it, she breaks it to pieces, in order to sacrifice all to the glory of her good Master . . . This exterior act is a lively figure of that which passes in her soul at this moment, for she offers to Jesus the homage of the virtues represented by the perfume: meekness, humility, contrition, piety, and tender love; and she joins thereto the offering of her heart, which by the divine grace has become a vessel of election and honour. . . . What an admirable model! O Magdalen, obtain for me the grace to imitate thee! . . . Let us consider the murmurs of the traitor Judas; he is insensible to the glory of Jesus Christ; all that does not favour his passion for money irritates him, and he hides the baseness of his sentiments under the appearance of zeal; not satisfied with

doing evil himself, he condemns the good which others do. Judas, thou wast good when Jesus chose thee and called thee to follow Him; how then in so short a time hast thou become so wicked? Ah! it is because thou hast abused a multitude of graces, and the abuse of these has hardened thy heart. O my Jesus! discover to me what a dreadful misfortune it is to resist Thy grace, and with what care I ought to put to profit all the graces Thou dost deign to bestow on me. . . . Let us remark the goodness of Jesus in receiving the offering of Magdalen, in defending her, and praising her; His divine Heart acts secretly upon that of this illustrious penitent; He purifies and sanctifies her more and more, and takes delight in enriching her with His heavenly gifts. . . . Jesus never allows Himself to be outdone in generosity; He diffuses His gifts abundantly in souls well prepared, whose sole care is to please Him. When will He discover in me those dispositions which will enable Him to overwhelm me as He desires with the favours He yearns to bestow?

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us adore Him as our God and Saviour, and the best of Masters. Let us give Him our heart, weak and miserable as it is, hoping that His infinite goodness will not refuse our offering. Let us ask Him for all the virtues we need, acknowledging that we cannot acquire them without His help. Let us promise to do all that depends on us to profit by this divine help, and to become less unworthy disciples of so good a Master.

Resolution.—To perform our actions in the presence of Jesus, and to please Him.

Offering of the Resolution, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—'My son, give Me thy heart' (Prov. xxiii. 26).

Prayer.—Receive, O Lord, etc., page 43.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

CONTEMPLATION CLX.

TRIUMPHANT ENTRY OF JESUS INTO JERUSALEM.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—'And when they drew nigh to Jerusalem, Jesus sent two of His disciples, saying to them: Go ye into the village that is over against you, and immediately you shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her; loose them, and bring them to Me. And the disciples going, did as Jesus commanded them. And they brought the ass and the colt, and laid their garments upon them, and made Him sit thereon. And a very great multitude spread their garments in the way; and others cut down boughs from the trees, and strewed them in the way. And the multitude that followed, cried, saying: Hosanna to the Son of David. Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord, Hosanna in the highest' (Matt. xxi. 1—9).

2*nd Prelude.*—Represent to yourself the road covered with garments and palm-branches, and the crowd which escorts Jesus.

3*rd Prelude.*—Divine Jesus, enter my soul in triumph when thou deignest to visit it in Holy Communion, but never permit that I should afterwards have the misfortune to imitate the inconstancy of the Jewish people, and drive Thee from my heart, after having received Thee within it.

1*st Point.*—Consider the persons.

Numerous groups of people line the road; they glory in being the disciples of Jesus, and hasten forward to follow Him. Our divine Lord, mounted on an ass, is led in triumph. What gentle and amiable majesty! He is surrounded by His apostles, who are at the climax of their joy. The people seem beside themselves with happiness. But where art thou, O Mary? Come forward and share the glory of thy dear Son. No, the

Mother of God humiliated was near Him in the crib; she will follow Him to Calvary, but on the day of His glory she hides herself, teaching me that obscurity and a desire to be ignored by creatures is the surest way to preserve the graces of God, and to advance with constancy in the love of Jesus. O my divine Mother, make me profit by this important lesson!

2nd Point.—Consider the actions.

The eagerness of the people to strew the palm-branches on the ground, to spread their garments in the way for Jesus to pass over them. The crowd increases every moment; the people are all excitement and press forward; joy and respect are exhibited on every countenance. Jesus advances slowly, seated on the lowly animal which the disciples had brought to Him; He advances amidst acclamations and shouts of triumph, and thus are verified the words of the prophet: 'Tell ye the daughter of Zion: Behold thy King cometh to thee meek, and sitting upon an ass' (Matt. xxi. 5). Divine Jesus, King of my heart, how often Thou hast come to me full of meekness and love; Thou dost come down from heaven on Thy holy altar, and from Thy altar into my heart. Ah! mayest Thou be for ever blessed; may all in me unite, to commence in this life the everlasting Hosanna which I hope to sing with Thy saints for all eternity in the abode of Thy glory.

3rd Point.—Listen to the words—to the shouts of joy and acclamations of triumph.

All who profess to be the disciples of Jesus form several groups; ravished with joy, they proclaim aloud the glory of God, recounting the miracles of which they have been the witnesses: 'Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord,' they say (Matt. xxi. 9). And those who went before Him, as well as those who followed Him, cried out with one voice: 'Hosanna to the Son of David; blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord, Hosanna in the highest' (Matt.

xxi. 9). The enemies of Jesus dare not impose silence on so many united voices; they realize their own impotence at this moment when all hearts are with Jesus, but, unable to contain the violence of the spite which has taken possession of them, they address themselves to our divine Saviour, saying: 'Master, rebuke Thy disciples. To whom He said: I say to you, that if these shall hold their peace, the stones will cry out' (Luke xix. 39, 40). Yes, my adorable Lord, all creatures owe Thee their praises; it rejoices me to behold Thy triumph. Ah! if the inconstant people who offer Thee their homage to-day are soon to demand Thy death, there is a more lasting triumph, one more worthy of Thee, which calls for my attention at this moment, those eternal joys and never-ending triumphs which I hope one day to witness and to share. Oh! what a happiness for me when I shall hear the sacred vaults of the heavenly Jerusalem resound with the canticles of love, of which my Jesus will be for all eternity the object!

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us adore Him, praise Him, and glorify Him, in union with His true disciples. Let us bless Him for having come to us full of love in the mystery of the Incarnation, and in that of the Holy Eucharist. Let us beg of Him never to permit that we should imitate the inconstancy of the Jewish people, but rather to grant us the grace to glorify Him at all times.

Resolutions.—To glorify Jesus by frequent acts of love, and to do our actions for His glory.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—'Behold thy King cometh to thee meek' (Matt. xxi. 5). 'Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord' (Matt. xxi. 9).

Prayer.—Receive, O Lord, etc., page 43.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

CONTEMPLATION CLXI.

JESUS WEEPS OVER JERUSALEM.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—'And when He drew near to Jerusalem, seeing the city, He wept over it, saying: If thou also hadst known, and that in this thy day, the things that are to thy peace; but now they are hidden from thy eyes' (Luke xix. 41, 42).

2*nd Prelude.*—Represent to yourself anew the road covered with branches of trees, and the modest pomp of the procession of Jesus Christ.

3*rd Prelude.*—Adorable Heart of Jesus, grant me grace to interest myself as Thou didst in the salvation of poor sinners.

1*st Point.*—Consider the persons.

The numerous groups of people who escort our divine Lord, and the apostles who surround Him . . . joy beams on every countenance. . . . O my dear Lord! dost Thou too share in the joy excited by Thy triumph? . . . No, Jesus weeps; His divine Heart is penetrated with bitter grief at the sight of Jerusalem, foreseeing its approaching desolation and ruin. . . Divine Saviour! it is thus Thou dost afflict Thyself daily on account of the fate of sinners, it is thus Thou hast wept over me when I wandered away from Thee; how shall I not be penetrated with gratitude at the sight of so much goodness, how shall I refrain from detesting sin, the dreadful evil which forces Thee to weep?

2*nd Point.*—Listen to the words.

Jesus addresses Himself to the guilty city. Alas! He exclaims, 'If thou also hadst known in this thy day the things that are to thy peace; but now they are hidden from thy eyes' (Luke xix. 42). O terrible words! Jerusalem shuts her eyes to the

light; the Saviour whom she receives to-day with such transports of joy she will reject in five days, because her faith is too weak, and her love too inconstant. . . . She does not foresee the dreadful evils her infidelity will draw down upon her. Jesus continues, 'For the days shall come upon thee, and thy enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round and straiten thee on every side, and beat thee flat to the ground, and thy children who are in thee, and they shall not leave in thee a stone upon a stone, because thou hast not known the time of thy visitation' (Luke xix. 43, 44), nor hast thou been willing to know that time. How many subjects here offer themselves for our reflections! The justice of God, Who punishes the abuse of His graces; the misery of sinners, who are deaf to His voice; the tender love of Jesus Christ, Who is grieved at the sight of the ungrateful city, because it foresees not the woes that will be drawn down on it by its deicide. O Sacred Heart of my Saviour, give me to share Thy compassion and Thy zeal, make my heart alive to all Thy interests, render me capable of consoling Thee for the coldness of so many ungrateful Christians who grieve Thee by their obstinate resistance to the advances of Thy grace.

3rd Point.—Consider the actions.

The manifestations of grief shown by the divine Jesus. . . . The interior solicitations by which His grace urges an infinity of souls not to consummate their reprobation. . . . The resistance of some who become more and more hardened. . . . The fidelity of others who are converted, and receive with the grace of their conversion those graces also which others have refused to accept. . . . O Jesus, Thou dost still urge sinners to return to Thee, and those who are faithful receive a double grace; Thou dost will that I should receive also the favours rejected by the obstinate. Ah! Lord, I also desire this, that so I may indemnify Thy love for their contempt and outrages; but that the fruit of so many

graces may not remain to me alone, make them serve, O Lord, to render me capable of moving these unhappy sinners, and worthy to be heard when I pray for them. Grant that we may all reach heaven one day, and there unite in glorifying Thy mercy for all eternity.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us render our homage of love to His adorable Heart, begging Him to teach us with what an excess of love He cherishes all mankind, and how afflicting to Him is the loss of unhappy sinners. Let us ask Him for grace to share His sentiments, to afflict ourselves for the loss of souls with Him, and to labour with the utmost of our power to prevent this evil, begging Him to replenish us with all those virtues that can render our zeal efficacious.

Resolutions.—To profit by every opportunity that shall present itself to-day to procure the salvation of sinners; to pray for their conversion by frequent ejaculatory prayers.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—Heart of Jesus, refuge of sinners, listen to our prayers in their behalf.

Prayer.—Soul of Christ, etc., page 4.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CLXII.

COMPARISON OF THE GRAIN OF WHEAT CAST INTO THE EARTH.

'Now there were certain Gentiles who came to Philip, saying: Sir, we would see Jesus. Philip cometh and telleth Andrew. Again, Andrew and Philip told Jesus. And Jesus answered them, saying: The hour is come that the Son of Man should be glorified. Amen, amen, I say to you, unless the grain of wheat falling into the ground die, itself remaineth alone. But if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.'—JOHN xii. 20-25.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—Represent to yourself a public place in

Jorusalem, where Jesus was when Andrew and Philip brought to Him the Gentiles who desired to see Him.

2nd Prelude.—Divine Jesus, Who didst die to give me life, grant me grace to love Thee perfectly, and to love also for Thy sake all those Thou hast died for on Calvary.

1st Point.—Jesus is the Saviour of all mankind.

'The hour is come that the Son of Man should be glorified' (John xii. 23). These words, pronounced by Jesus Christ at the moment when His two disciples announced to Him that the Gentiles desired to see Him, give us to understand how greatly our divine Lord desired to manifest Himself to all men. During the time of His preaching, He had made Judea alone the theatre of His zeal, the will of His heavenly Father being that He should offer salvation to His chosen people before offering it to the other nations; but the moment draws near in which He is to consummate His sacrifice, and give the order to His apostles to evangelize the whole world; His divine Heart enlarges at the thought, and He proclaims that the time is come when all nations are to be enlightened with His light. O my Jesus, my Saviour, and my Master, Who dost desire me to share Thy sentiments, make Thy interests my own, make me alive to all that concerns Thee, grant me grace to unite in that holy joy with which Thy divine soul was overwhelmed at the sight of the countless nations which were soon to profit by Thy redemption, and to compose Thy new-born Church. I offer Thee, O Jesus, all the glory that these true Christians have rendered to Thee; I beg of Thee to increase the number of Thy faithful disciples, even to the end of time, thereby to indemnify Thyself with them for all the evils Thy enemies have caused Thee to suffer, and for all the indignities which are daily committed against Thy adorable Majesty.

2nd Point.—It is by dying for us that Jesus has saved us.

'Unless the grain of wheat falling into the ground die, itself remaineth alone. But if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit' (John xii. 25). Jesus here compares His death to

the dissolution of the grain of wheat which has been sown. Nothing is smaller or more contemptible in appearance than this grain cast into the earth, to suffer, as it seems, total destruction therein; yet there springs forth from it a germ of fruitfulness, which soon produces an ear, and then brings forth abundant fruits. Thus our divine Saviour, in dying for us, has become the Father of a great nation. It is, then, to Thy death, O my Jesus, that I owe the life of my soul; in the midst of the torments of the Cross Thou didst become my Father. O loving Father! I am the child of Thy sorrows and the object of Thy love. Can I refuse to correspond with Thy tenderness? I love Thee, O my God, and I desire to love Thee more and more each moment of my life. For Thy sake I will love all others who in common with me are the purchase of Thy Blood. O Blood of my Jesus, cement for ever the ties of charity which unite me to my neighbour; render us all one family, to give glory to Thy adorable Heart through a union of unchangeable and perfect charity.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us adore Him as our Saviour, and thank Him lovingly for having deigned to die to give us life. Let us beg of Him to replenish us with zeal for His glory, and entreat Him to grant us the gift of perfect charity towards others.

Resolution.—To prove our love to Jesus by supporting meekly the defects of our neighbours.

Offering of the Resolution, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—Jesus has given me life by His death. All mankind are in common with me the price of the Blood of Jesus Christ.

Prayer.—Soul of Christ, etc., page 4.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CLXIII.

JESUS GLORIFIES HIS FATHER BY ACCEPTING THE TORMENTS OF HIS PASSION.

'Now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say?' (Jesus alluded to His Passion, which He foresaw at this moment, with all its horrors.) 'My Father, save Me from this hour. But for this cause I came unto this hour. Father, glorify Thy name. A voice, therefore, came from Heaven: I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.'—JOHN xii. 27, 28.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—As before, page 151.

2*nd Prelude.*—Adorable Heart of Jesus, grant me grace to offer myself as Thou didst to Thy Father, to procure His glory, and accomplish His holy will in all things.

1*st Point.*—Jesus gives Himself up to death to procure His Father's glory.

Jesus prays to His heavenly Father to glorify His holy name. His heavenly Father answers that He has already glorified it and will glorify it again. Let us consider what are the dispositions with which Jesus makes this prayer to His heavenly Father, and what is the meaning of the answer which He receives. Jesus foresees His approaching Passion: He beholds it with all its horrors, and permits His holy soul to be troubled and filled with fear, experiencing thus for a brief space the mortal agony which He was to undergo in the Garden of Olives. He pronounces these words: 'Now is my soul troubled, and what shall I say?' (John xii. 27). He seems to seek for some means to escape from the severity of the torments which await Him, and addresses Himself to His Father, saying, 'Father, save Me from this hour' (John xii. 27) so agonizing; but immediately surmounting, by the ardour of His generous zeal, this momentary fear, He adds: 'But for this cause I came unto this hour' (John xii. 27). I have only taken human nature upon Me to offer Myself a

sacrifice to the divine Majesty. Spare Me not then, O My Father, and since Thou art to be glorified by My death, no matter at what price it may cost Me, 'My Father, glorify Thy name.' And God the Father, accepting the offering, replies from the highest heavens: 'I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again' (John xii. 28). I have glorified it already by Thy Incarnation, which has abased Thee even to the condition of sinners; I will glorify it again by the mystery of the Cross, which is to consummate the grand work Thou hast descended from heaven to earth to accomplish. Let us unite ourselves to the Sacred Heart of our divine Lord, there to adore the sovereign majesty of His Father; let us unite ourselves to His offering, repeating after Him, and in the same sentiments as He did, those words in which are expressed the most perfect devotedness and the purest love. 'My Father, glorify Thy name!' Can we fear that God will exact of us sacrifices beyond our strength? The Sacred Heart of Jesus is Itself our strength, our light, and our consolation.

2nd Point.—We ought to imitate the devotedness of Jesus as much as we possibly can.

Jesus is our Model. We ought to imitate His devotedness to the accomplishment of His Father's Will; we ought to offer ourselves to our heavenly Father with a generous and loving heart, that so He may do with us as He shall please, and may find us ready to accept the measure of sufferings which His divine Providence shall allot unto us. This is to imitate Jesus, to unite ourselves to His adorable Heart, and to merit His most precious graces and most intimate communications. This is the only means of enjoying perfect peace, and of not hindering the merciful designs of our Lord with reference to our soul. Why, then, fear to place ourselves entirely in the hands of God? Why do we desire to regulate the extent of God's Will over us, and the measure of our own fidelity? If He ask much, He will give much grace, since He is all-powerful and infinitely good; if He ask little, the generosity of our

offering will be recompensed as if He had really insisted upon all we were resolved to grant Him. . . What consideration can hamper us in future? . . . O my God, I now promise Thee no longer to have any reserve in the oblation I make Thee of my entire self; receive me in union with Jesus my adorable Saviour, and dispose of me according to Thy holy Will; command me all that Thou pleasest: with all my heart I will do Thy behest, with the help of Thy holy grace.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us beg of Him to teach us to devote ourselves as He did to the glory of our heavenly Father, and to replenish us with that ardent love which is discouraged at nothing, but finds all things easy. Let us ask His pardon for the infidelities which up to the present time have hindered us from receiving so great a grace. Let us offer ourselves generously to Him to accomplish His holy Will in all things. Let us make several acts of faith and confidence in the power of His grace. It will never fail us so long as we offer no resistance.

Resolution.—To make generously and lovingly every effort and sacrifice God may demand of us.

Offering of the Resolution, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—'Father, glorify Thy name' (John xii. 28). 'Behold, I come to do Thy Will, O my God' (Heb. x. 9).

Prayer.—Receive, O Lord, etc., page 43.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CLXIV.

THE PROMISE OF JESUS.

'Now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all things to Myself.'—JOHN xii. 31, 32.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude, page 151.

2nd Prelude.—Divine Jesus, grant me grace to love

Thee sufficiently to attach myself with Thee to the Cross.

1*st Point.*—Jesus has destroyed the kingdom of satan by the Cross.

'Now is the judgment of the world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out' (John xii. 31).

The prince of this world is satan. Our Lord announces that he shall be cast out, and that his power shall be overthrown by the mystery of the Cross. Sin reigned on the earth: men erected idols to the most infamous passions, and precipitated themselves in crowds into hell. It is the Incarnation, and above all the Death of Jesus Christ, which has destroyed the reign of the prince of darkness. The preaching of the Gospel has driven him from his temples by proscribing idolatry, and the power of grace has constrained him to go forth from the hearts which he possessed, by gaining them to Jesus Christ. What gratitude do we not owe Thee, O adorable Saviour, for these inestimable benefits? What do I not owe Thee in a special manner, I who have experienced the effects of Thy coming even before I was capable of appreciating them? Thou hast caused me to be born, O Lord, in the bosom of Thy Church; Thou hast prevented my soul with numberless favours; Thou never ceasest to load me with Thy most precious gifts, and to warn me continually against the snares of the enemy of my salvation. O my Jesus, my Redeemer and Saviour! enlighten me with the light of a lively faith; grant that I may know the greatness of the evils from which Thy love has preserved me, by opposing to the wiles of satan the all-powerful strength of the mystery of Thy Cross.

2*nd Point.*—Jesus on the Cross attracts all hearts, and gives them the strength to suffer.

'And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all things to Myself' (John xii. 32). Jesus by His death has merited for us the graces necessary to overthrow the prince of darkness; but, in order to rejoice in so precious a

triumph, we must apply to ourselves the fruits of His victory by sustaining some combats. These conflicts are painful, since all our inclinations are opposed to the practice of virtue. What has the Sacred Heart of Jesus done for us? He has accomplished to the letter the promise we are now meditating: 'I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all things to Myself' (John xii. 32). He has caused to flow forth from His Cross, from His Wounds, and above all from His sacred Side, a secret virtue, the effects of which are experienced by all faithful souls; a virtue which sweetens the most laborious efforts and painful sacrifices by causing us to love Jesus, the Model and Consoler of all who suffer. This divine virtue of the Cross attracts and solicits all hearts; everyone should both feel it and taste it; if more faithful, everyone would profit by the pains and trials sent them by divine Providence in order to unite themselves to Jesus suffering, and to practise that mortification of mind and heart so necessary to every true Christian.

If this sweet and powerful attraction is unknown to me, it is because I fear suffering too much, and am wanting in generosity in the service of my good Master. O my adorable Saviour! put a stop to such a dangerous disposition; I wish at length to be faithful to Thy holy grace; deign to draw my soul to Thee by detaching me from myself, and from all that is not Thee; open unto me the adorable wound of Thy Sacred Heart; may I ever find therein my repose and my life, and there learn to love Thee and to suffer for Thee until the moment shall arrive when Thou wilt recompense my efforts, by causing me to enjoy the fruits of victory.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us adore Him as our divine Ransom, and thank him with the deepest gratitude for the inestimable gifts which his death has procured for us. Let us humble ourselves at His feet for all the infidelities and resistances which have up to the present hindered us from savouring the mystery of the Cross, promising Him to

be more faithful and generous in future. Let us pray to Him to draw us to the practice of virtue by the sweet unction of His grace and the charms of His love.

Resolution.—To make generously every effort Jesus shall ask of us by the interior voice of His grace.

Offering of the Resolution, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—'When I shall be lifted up from the earth, I will draw all things to Myself' (John xii. 32). Lord, draw me, in accordance with Thy promise.

Prayer.—Soul of Christ, etc., page 4.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CLXV.

THE WARNINGS AND THREATS OF JESUS.

'Jesus, therefore, said to them: Yet a little while the light is among you. Walk, whilst you have the light, that the darkness overtake you not.'—JOHN xii. 35.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude*, page 151.

2*nd Prelude.*—Grant me grace, O Lord, always to walk in Thy light in the paths of truth and justice.

1*st Point.*—We ought to profit of the light of faith, lest it should grow dim and be extinguished through our fault.

'Walk whilst you have the light, that the darkness overtake you not' (John xii. 35). These words, in which Jesus exhorts the Jews to profit by the time He was yet with them, are addressed equally to us, and engage us not to neglect the precious lights of faith with which our souls are illuminated. These divine lights—which undeceive us regarding the dangerous errors of the world, and open our eyes to our own solid interests—are given us by God to make us observe His holy law, to remove us from all that may cause us to lose our souls, and to lead us safely in the way of salvation. These lights are given us that we may

know Jesus ; that we may model our conduct on His ; that we may be replenished with His Spirit and inflamed with His love. If we be faithful to put to profit these lights, they will become stronger and stronger ; but if we neglect to profit by them, they will diminish by degrees, and perhaps be entirely extinguished. This was the terrible misfortune with which Jesus menaced the Jews, saying to them : 'Walk while you have the light, that the darkness overtake you not' (John xii. 35). O my divine Saviour ! how often have I not allowed those pure and vivid lights to grow dim with which Thou hast deigned to favour my soul, by alluring me to follow Thee ! How often have I not exposed myself to lose them by my delays and culpable resistances ! I thank Thee, O my God, for not having punished me as I deserved by withdrawing from me those favours whose value I discarded. I pray Thee, secure them evermore within me. May Thy grace enlighten all my steps, and enable me to arrive at length at the happy abode where I shall contemplate the splendour of Thy glory.

2nd Point.—We ought to profit by the daylight of this life, since it is followed by a night in which we can work no longer.

'Walk while you have the light, that the darkness overtake you not' (John xii. 35). This light from which we must be eager to profit may also be considered as the day of this life ; a day which is very short, and is followed by a night in which no one is any longer capable of working. Every moment of life is of infinite value, since, well employed, it may procure us an eternal reward. What a loss is it not, then, to let so many moments, hours, and days run on without consecrating them to the glory and service of our Lord ! O my Jesus ! how little I comprehend my true interests when I neglect to employ in Thy service the interval of this life which Thou hast allotted me, and which will so soon, perhaps, reach its term. Thou dost deign to warn me that the darkness may at any moment overtake me ; should I not, then, be both senseless and ungrateful

if I refused to listen to this salutary warning? No, my Jesus, I will not be deaf to Thy voice; if I have up to the present misemployed the time which I have passed on earth, I will repair my loss by constant and unwearying fervour in future. Bless, O Lord, my resolution, and I will serve Thee fervently for the rest of my life.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us thank Him for the warnings by which He deigns to stimulate our souls. Let us beg of Him to teach us the value of the light of faith and of the span of our life, asking His pardon if we have ever abused these precious gifts. Let us promise Him to be faithful in future, and ask Him for His grace to help us.

Resolutions.—To regulate all our actions by the light of faith, and often to renew our intention of doing them to please God.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—'Walk while you have the light' (John xii. 35). Jesus, true Light, have mercy on me!

Prayer.—Soul of Christ, etc., page 4.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CLXVI.

PARABLE OF THE TWO SONS.

'A certain man had two sons, and coming to the first, he said: Son, go work to-day in my vineyard. And he, answering, said: I will not. But afterwards, being moved with repentance, he went. And, coming to the other, he said in like manner. And he, answering, said: I go; and he went not. Which of the two did the father's will?—MATT. xxi. 28, seq.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude*, page 151.

2*nd Prelude.*—Grant me grace, O Lord, not to limit myself to sterile promises, but to serve Thee efficaciously by works worthy of Thee.

1*st Point.*—God does not demand promises but deeds.

Our Lord portrays in this parable the conduct of the Jews and the Gentiles. The latter are represented by the first of the two sons, who, having refused at first to obey his father, was afterwards touched with repentance, and repaired his fault. The second son represents the Jews, whose entire religion in the time of our Lord's preaching consisted in nothing more than in ostentatious forms of a worship in which the heart took no part, and which did not prevent their conduct from being bad; even still our heavenly Father has children who appear submissive to His holy will, and ready to obey Him in everything, but who limit themselves to vain protestations of a fidelity which never takes effect. Am I not of this number? I often promise my God to be faithful to Him; I make good resolutions; but do I come to the practice of them when occasions present themselves? Sublime discourses do not sanctify us, says the author of the 'Imitation,' but a holy life renders us God's friends; it is better to do than to say, and our Lord assures us in the Gospel that not everyone that saith 'Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven,' but that that holy dwelling is reserved for those alone who shall have done the will of His heavenly Father. O my Jesus, never permit me to be deluded on this important point; I desire henceforth to serve Thee zealously, with the assistance of Thy holy grace; receive my promise and bless my good-will.

2*nd Point.*—God forgets past offences when we become sincerely converted.

'A certain man had two sons, and he said to the first, Go and work in my vineyard; but he said, I will not; but afterwards, being moved with repentance, he went' (Matt. xxi. 28, 29). If God loves innocence and prompt fidelity, He also deigns to look with goodness on sincere repentance; He never rejects a contrite and humble heart. Converted sinners have a share in His love and His

graces as well as the just. With what confidence and holy joy should not then my heart be penetrated! I have sinned, I have long resisted the will of my God; but if I will but henceforth submit myself to it, my good God is always my Father, He is ready to restore His love to me, or rather, He has already restored it to me, since no interval of time elapses between returning to God sincerely and being favourably received by Him. O infinite merciful Lord! how can I refuse to cast myself at Thy feet and deplore my past ingratitude in the bitterness of my soul! O my God and my Father! I repent having served Thee so badly, and loved Thee so little; I will no longer resist Thee: command me all Thou wilt, and I will do it lovingly, with the help of Thy holy grace.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us adore Him as our God, our Saviour, and our Father; let us humble ourselves for all our infidelities in His service; let us beg of Him to preserve us from the illusion of relying on a good-will alone, without ever coming to put it in practice; let us make generous resolutions, asking for His powerful grace to be faithful to them.

Resolution.—To make several acts to-day of the virtue we need the most.

Offering of the Resolution, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—'I come to do Thy Will, O my God' (Heb. x. 9). 'Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?' (Acts ix. 6).

Prayer.—Receive, O Lord, etc., page 43.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CLXVII.

PARABLE OF THE VINEYARD.

'There was a man, a householder, who planted a vineyard, and made a hedge round about it, and dug in it a press, and built a tower . . . And when the time of the vintage drew nigh, he sent his servants to the husbandmen that they might receive the fruits thereof.'—MATT. xvi. 33, 34.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—Represent to yourself our Lord teaching in the Temple.

2*nd Prelude.*—Grant me grace, O Jesus, to respond to Thy care by producing fruits of holiness and justice.

1*st Point.*—Our souls are the vines which the father of the family cultivates with so much care.

'There was a man, a householder, who planted a vineyard, and made a hedge around it, and dug in it a press, and built a tower' (Matt. xxi. 33). Our Lord in this parable describes to us all He has done in His infinite goodness for His people, and for each chosen soul; for mine, which He has overwhelmed with so many precious favours. . . He has chosen me as a vine plant is chosen, but with still greater care; He has preferred me to an infinite number of beings He might have created, but who have been left in nothingness—to a prodigious number of creatures endowed with reason, who have not had the happiness to be born in the bosom of His Church as I have. This holy Church is the soil in which He has planted me, that I might find in it abundant nourishment, that in it I might be watered by the dew of heaven, and ripened by the sun of justice, the sun of His love, even by the Sacred Heart of Jesus Itself. He has surrounded me with a hedge to defend me from wild beasts and to shelter me from being harmed by the passers by; this hedge is His paternal protection, His grace, which renders powerless all the efforts of hell against me; it is His holy law, which will

always be my safeguard so long as I shall be faithful not to infringe it. He has built a tower in my midst, an impregnable fortress; for He has Himself established His dwelling in the depths of my soul, to repel the assaults of my enemies by His all-powerful strength. What benefits! O my God, never permit me to be so ungrateful as not to profit by them.

2nd Point.—God wishes us to bring forth fruits of holiness and justice.

'And when the time of the vintage drew nigh, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits thereof' (Matt. xxi. 34). God lavishes His favours on us; but He expects from us the fidelity which will make us bring forth fruits of holiness and justice; each day ought to ripen these fruits and render them more abundant, since every grace which is granted us tends to make us become more humble, more patient, more charitable, more meek—in a word, more like unto our adorable Model. Where are the fruits which I have borne up to the present? I, who have been laden by our Blessed Lord with His choicest favours and most precious gifts? A vine which produces nothing but useless branches is not worthy to occupy the ground; it must be cut down and cast into the fire. O my God! treat me not according to the rigour of Thy justice; treat me, if necessary, with a holy severity; punish me, but let it be in Thy mercy, and not in Thy wrath; tear out of my heart all that displeases Thee within it; prune it as the vine is pruned to rid it of its useless branches, but turn not away Thy face from me; I will no longer neglect any means of overcoming my faults and acquiring the virtues in which I am deficient, but I have great need of Thy powerful help; aid me, then, O Lord; I abandon myself into Thy hands, that Thou mayest dispose of me according to Thy divine will, and I place all my confidence in Thy infinite mercy.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us adore Him and thank

Him, acknowledging that it is to His merits we are indebted for the countless graces which our heavenly Father has bestowed upon us. Let us ask His pardon for the little fruit we have produced from His graces, begging Him not to withdraw them from us. Let us ask His assistance, that we may commence to serve Him with renewed fervour.

Resolution.—To perform all our actions to-day for God.

Offering of the Resolution, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—Lord, Thy mercy is my only justice.

Prayer.—Receive, O Lord, etc., page 43.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CLXVIII.

JESUS THE CORNER-STONE.

'Jesus saith to them: Have you never read in the Scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner? By the Lord this has been done, and it is wonderful in our eyes . . . And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken; and on whomsoever it shall fall, it shall grind him to powder.'—MATT. xxi. 42-44.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude, page 164.

2nd Prelude.—Divine Jesus, grant me grace to place all my hope in Thee, and to procure an increase of Thy reign according to my power.

1st Point.—Jesus is the Saviour of all mankind, and the foundation on which all religion is based.

'The stone which the builders rejected, the same has become the head of the corner' (Matt. xxi. 42). Jesus is Himself that mysterious stone rejected by the builders, that is to say, by the princes of the priests, compelled by their state to labour at the erection of the heavenly Jerusalem by conducting men to salvation; but that stone, cast away as unworthy of any place in the edifice, has

become the chief corner-stone. Jesus Christ, in reconciling all mankind with His Father, and meriting for all the grace of divine adoption, has re-united in one people the Jews and Gentiles, as a corner-stone unites two walls of an edifice. This title of corner-stone is, then, infinitely glorious to our adorable Saviour. It brings before us the conquest of the entire world as the fruit of His death, and ought to excite in us the deepest gratitude. Jesus Christ is again called the Foundation-stone on which we are established, to give us to understand that He is the groundwork of all religion, and that our salvation and perfection can have no other basis than the application of His merits accorded us, and the union we have with Him by sanctifying grace. O my Jesus, all is found in Thee, and nothing out of Thee; I ought, then, to unite myself closely to Thee, to place all my trust in Thee, and to love Thee alone; grant me Thy divine love; I will unite myself to Thee with all my heart, and nothing shall ever be able to separate me from Thee, my only hope and my sovereign good.

2nd Point.—The enemies of Jesus Christ, and of His religion, can injure none but themselves.

'Whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken, and on whomsoever it shall fall it shall grind him to powder' (Matt. xxi. 44). Those who fall on the foundation-stone to break and destroy it are persecutors, heretics, infidels; and all those who dare to attack the Son of God, whether in His adorable Person, or in that of His holy religion. Our divine Lord says they shall be broken; their efforts will have no other effect than to cause their reprobation and show forth with splendour the triumph of Him Whose strength is invincible. What a subject of consolation for us in the midst of the evils which afflict the Church! the enemies of God and of His Christ will be covered with confusion; never will they be able to destroy the reign of Jesus; in vain will they strike with fury against the Foundation-stone, to destroy it and overturn the edifice

which it upholds; they shall all be broken against it, without being able even to shake it. Jesus adds that he on whom this stone shall fall shall be ground to dust. These words contain a terrible threat against impenitent sinners, since it is they who will be overwhelmed at the last day with the weight of the severity of a Saviour become their Judge. O my Jesus! they will then glorify Thy justice, but it is not of this glory that Thy Sacred Heart is jealous; Thou wouldst rather that they should glorify Thy love during life, which is the period of Thy mercy. Listen, then, O Lord, to my prayers in their behalf; soften their hard hearts by the strength of Thy grace, that so the rigour of Thy divine justice may never be exercised upon them; open Thy Sacred Heart unto them; its deep wound is the mysterious cleft in the rock which serves as an abode for the moaning turtle; deign to receive them within it, and grant them the gift of sincere contrition, that so mixing their tears with Thy Blood, they may be purified from their stains, and preserved from the blows of Thy terrible vengeance.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us adore Him as the Saviour and Lord of the universe, but especially as our Lord and Master, and thank Him for having chosen us as His privileged people. Let us ask Him for the grace to attach ourselves so closely to Him, that nothing may ever be able to again disunite us. Let us ask Him to inspire us with ardent zeal for His glory and for the salvation of sinners.

Resolutions.—To do all our actions in union with Jesus Christ, and with a view to procure His glory. To pray by frequent elevations of our heart for the coming of His reign and for the conversion of sinners.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—Divine Jesus, reign over all hearts.

Prayer.—Pater Noster.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CLXIX.

THE QUESTION OF THE PHARISEES ON THE OBLIGATION OF PAYING THE TRIBUTE.

'Then the Pharisees, going, consulted among themselves how to ensnare Him in His speech. And they sent to Him their disciples, with the Herodians, saying: Master, we know that Thou art a true speaker, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest Thou for any man; for Thou dost not regard the person of men. Tell us, therefore, what dost Thou think: Is it lawful to give tribute to Cæsar, or not?'—MATT. xxii. 15-17.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude*, page 164.

2*nd Prelude*.—Divine Jesus, fill my mind with the spirit of prudence, that so I may avoid the snares of the world and of hell.

1*st Point*.—The Pharisees seek to surprise Jesus.

'The Pharisees going, consulted among themselves how to ensnare Him in His speech' (Matt. xxii. 15). These perverse and deceitful men, driven to despair by the success of the preaching of Jesus Christ, were on the watch for an opportunity of destroying Him Who had come to save them; they thought they had this time found an infallible means of doing so. For this end they send their disciples with the Herodians, to ask Him if it was lawful to give tribute to Cæsar or not. Their malice had arranged the choice of such ambassadors, for Jesus could not fail to draw on Himself the hatred of the one or the other if He gave a direct answer. Clearly, if He said that the tribute ought to be paid, He would exasperate the Jews, who, supporting with difficulty the Roman yoke, regarded this mark of dependence as contrary to their rights and privileges; if He said the contrary, He would arm the secular power against Himself, since the Herodians, or partizans of Herod, would not fail to accuse Him before their master, of rebellion against the emperors. It is thus that satan and his

emissaries artfully lay their snares for us; woe be to us if we neglect to watch, in order to discover and unmask their craftiness! But how can we do this? The sequel of the Gospel narrative informs us. The deputies approach Jesus Christ, and in accordance with the lesson that has been given them, they commence by praising Him: 'Master,' they say, 'we know that Thou art a true speaker, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest Thou for any man; for Thou dost not regard the person of men. Tell us, therefore, what dost Thou think: Is it lawful to give tribute to Cæsar, or not?' (Matt. xxii. 16, 17). Let us examine well all the interior and exterior snares of our enemies: we shall see that they always begin by seducing us, and flattering our self-love, and trying to fill us with a presumptuous esteem for ourselves; it is only by humility that we can shelter ourselves from their wiles. Humility is the mother of prudence, and can alone be our safeguard, and procure us the victory. O my God, grant that I may esteem as greatly as I ought so necessary a virtue, and use every care to acquire it.

2nd Point.—Jesus unmasks the snares of the Pharisees. 'But Jesus, knowing their wickedness, said: Why do you tempt me, ye hypocrites?' (Matt. xxii. 18). He teaches us by His example to reject with horror, at least interiorly, the praises, merited or not, by which our enemies may seek to surprise us; then He adds: 'Show me the coin of the tribute. And they offered Him a penny. And Jesus said to them: Whose image and inscription is this? They say to Him, Cæsar's. Then He saith to them: Render therefore to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's' (Matt. xxii. 19, seq.). The answer was without reply; if Cæsar had been able to coin money, without opposition, he had a right to exact the tribute thereof. The enemies of Jesus therefore admired His wisdom, and withdrew without reply. O my Jesus, Thou dost teach me that if I wish to impose silence on those who try to surprise me, I must attach

myself firmly to solid principles of faith and morality, despising all double-tongued questions of heresy and impiety; give me then, O Lord, a simple and upright mind. Thou knowest all the dangers to which I may be exposed: fill me with Thy divine wisdom. I firmly believe, O my God, that all the malice of men and all the snares of hell cannot hurt me if I be humble, vigilant, and faithful in confiding in Thee. Place, then, within me these holy dispositions, and I shall no longer have anything to fear.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us adore Him as the increated wisdom Who, when He pleases, confounds the wisdom of men, and gives to the humble the graces necessary to escape the snares of their enemies. Let us ask Him for that Christian prudence which is founded on humility, and a spirit of prayer and watchfulness. Let us promise Him on our part to do all in our power to acquire so necessary a virtue.

Resolution. — To labour seriously to acquire humility, that so we may be enabled to escape the snares which may be laid for us at any time.

Offering of the Resolution, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—O my Jesus, replenish me with prudence, which is a gift of Thy Spirit.

Prayer.—Soul of Christ, etc., page 4.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CLXX.

OUR SOULS ARE CREATED IN THE IMAGE OF GOD, AND THEY BELONG TO HIM.

'Whose image is this? . . . Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's; and to God, the things that are God's.'—MATT. xxii. 20, 21.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude*, page 164.

2*nd Prelude.*—Grant me grace, O my God, to consecrate to Thy glory all the powers of my soul.

1*st Point.*—God created our souls in His own image; sin disfigured them; Jesus Christ became man to restore them to their primitive beauty.

'Whose image is this?' (Matt. xxii. 20). Our souls resemble God in their nature, which is like His: spiritual, intelligent, free, and capable of loving. But this resemblance is not the only one He desires to find in them: He wishes us to labour unceasingly to limn His adorable perfections within us, namely, His goodness, His meekness, His mercy, His holiness. It was easy for man in the state of innocence thus to imitate his Creator; but now this imitation presents difficulties, and demands combats, but the grace of Jesus Christ makes the task possible to souls of good-will. Our divine Master, in becoming like unto us, has taught us by His example all we ought to do to render ourselves like unto God; and His infinite merits, which are applied to us when we have the courage to walk in His footsteps, give us a claim to recompenses infinitely more precious than all the advantages enjoyed by the first man before he sinned. What gratitude do I not then owe Thee, O my adorable Saviour! Thou hast indeed a right to say unto me: Give to God that which is God's. My soul belongs to Thee, O Lord, Thou hast created it for Thy glory, and redeemed it with Thy Blood; I ought in consequence to consecrate all its

faculties to Thee; I ought by employing my mind to know Thee, my heart to love Thee, and my will to serve Thee, retrace each day Thy divine image within me, and thus pay Thee the tribute of adoration, love, and gratitude I owe Thee on so many titles.

2nd Point.—God has created our souls for Himself; this end is our glory and happiness.

'And render to God the things which are God's' (Matt. xxii. 21). God has created our souls after His own image; like Him, they are capable of knowing, of loving, and of exercising free-will. He insists upon our paying Him a tribute of praise, love, and fidelity. What can be more glorious or advantageous to us than to acquit ourselves of this sacred debt? It is considered a glory in the world to belong to the great; it seems as if their rank reflects on those who serve them. Yet what comparison can be made between their dignity and that of God, Who is the King of Kings, and Sovereign Lord of all that exists? In the world we esteem ourselves happy to love a good father, a kind mother, or a friend worthy of esteem and affection; what happiness for us then to love a God infinitely amiable, who disdains not to call us His children, who overwhelms us incessantly with numberless benefits, and who loves us with an infinite love! Yes, my God, I experience this; my happiness and my glory consist in loving Thee, in serving Thee, and in consecrating entirely to Thee the use of all the faculties of my soul. I bless Thee for having created my soul in Thy image, and for having assigned unto it so noble an end as that of glorifying and pleasing Thee. Pardon me, O Lord, all the faults and infidelities by which I have had the misfortune to depart from this end, and bless the resolution I now make of tending to it in future with all my heart and all my strength.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us adore Him as the Son of God, equal and like unto His Father, Who has vouchsafed to clothe Himself with our nature, in order to

re-establish our souls in their primitive dignity, and restore to them the beauty of which sin had robbed them. Let us thank Him for this inestimable benefit . . . Let us humble ourselves for having been negligent in imitating His divine virtues . . . Let us beg of Him to help us to repair the time we have lost by redoubled love and fidelity.

Resolutions.—To endeavour to do all our actions as Jesus performed His, that is to say, with care, zeal, meekness, humility, and, above all, with a view to glorify God.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—'I have given you an example, that as I have done to you, so you do also' (John xiii. 15). 'Render to God the things which are God's' (Matt. xxii. 21).

Prayer.—Receive, O Lord, etc., page 43.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CLXXI.

THE WIDOW'S MITE.

'And Jesus, sitting over against the treasury, beheld how the people cast money therein, and many that were rich cast in much. And there came a certain poor widow, and she cast in two mites. And, calling His disciples together, He saith to them: Amen, I say to you, this poor widow hath cast in more than all they who have cast into the treasury. For they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want hath cast in all she had, even her whole living.'—MARK xii. 41-44.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—Represent to yourself the exterior porch of the Temple. Jesus is sitting there facing the treasury; He observes those who come to cast money into it.

2*nd Prelude.*—Grant me grace, O Jesus, to animate all my offerings by a pure intention and perfect generosity.

1*st Point.*—God beholds and rewards all that we do for Him.

'And Jesus, sitting over against the treasury, beheld how the people cast money therein, and many that were rich cast in much. And there came a certain widow, and she cast in two mites' (Mark xii. 41, 42).

That which is done for men is often ignored, or, if it be known, it remains unrewarded. How many painful cares are borne to please the world, and are only repaid with indifference or contempt! It is not so with the service of God; everything in this is known, reckoned, appreciated, and rewarded. The eyes of our heavenly Father are continually fixed on us, and there is not a single good feeling nor one act of virtue escapes Him. What eagerness I ought to show, in consequence, to turn all to occasions of merit! If an ambitious man could be assured that all he did would be made known to his prince, and that he would be honourably promoted in proportion to his zeal and activity, with what care and industry would he not fulfil all his duties! And yet he would only be aspiring to perishable fame; but I aspire to the happiness of being loved by God, and of sharing one day in the triumph of Jesus Christ and in the possession of His heavenly kingdom; why, then, do I so often find myself so tepid and negligent in the practice of virtue? Ah! it is because my faith is too weak, and I do not sufficiently desire the gifts promised to generous souls. Have pity on me, my God; render my faith lively and practical; grant me grace ever to remember that Thy eyes are always fixed on me, and that Thou dost take into account all that I do for Thy love.

2nd Point.—God does not regard the value of our gifts, but the dispositions which accompany them.

'And calling His disciples together, Jesus saith to them: Amen I say to you, this poor widow hath cast in more than all the rest. For they have given of their abundance, but she in her want hath cast in all she had, even her whole living' (Mark xii. 43, 44). God sees into the depths of our souls, and His goodness deigns to make account of all that we do for Him: the most trifling offering is to Him of inestim-

able value, if made with that generous love which gives unreservedly all that it can give. This is the disposition Jesus praises in the widow in the Gospel, and which He wishes to find within us when we consecrate to Him our gifts or our services. I ought then, if Providence gives me the opportunity of doing much for God, to be careful to lose nothing of the merit attached to it, and for that end to purify my intentions, inflame my ardour, and make complete my generosity. If my position only permits me to do small things, I should encourage myself with the thought that our Lord accepts them if I do them with great love. Thou hast no need of anyone, O Lord; Thy sovereign Majesty and almighty power is infinitely above all that Thy creatures can offer Thee; but their love gives Thee glory, and Thou dost ask of them their hearts; receive mine, O my God; unworthy and imperfect as it is, Thou wilt not reject it, if it be profoundly touched with the persuasion of its misery and of Thy goodness; may this heart, which Thou hast created only for Thy love, ever belong to Thee; replenish it with Thy love, and render all its offerings worthy of Thy divine complacency.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us adore Him as our God and our Rewarder. Let us ask Him for the grace never to lose the remembrance of His presence, and to seek Him alone in all the good we do. Let us beg of Him to pardon the human motives and imperfect intentions which may have glided into our good works. Let us offer our heart to Him, and consecrate to Him all our actions.

Resolutions.—Often to recall the presence of God, and to do all our actions to please Him.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—'My son, give Me thy heart' (Prov. xxiii. 26). 'Behold I come to do Thy will, O my God' (Heb. x. 9).

Prayer.—Receive O Lord, etc., page 43.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CLXXII.

JESUS PREDICTS THE DESTRUCTION OF THE TEMPLE.

'And Jesus, being come out of the Temple, went away. And His disciples came to show Him the buildings of the Temple. And He, answering, said to them: Do you see all these things? Amen, I say to you, there shall not be left here a stone upon a stone that shall not be destroyed.'—MATT. xxiv. 1, 2.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—Represent to yourself the road which led from the Temple to the Mount of Olives.

2*nd Prelude.*—Preserve me, O Lord, from the misfortune of incurring Thy indignation by abusing the graces Thou hast deigned to give me.

1*st Point.*—The destruction of the Temple of Jerusalem.

The Temple of Jerusalem was one of the most beautiful edifices in the world, as well for the choiceness of its materials as for the grandeur and regularity of its architecture, and for the precious decorations and costly gifts with which it was ornamented. This Temple was the only one in the world where the true God was adored, and the only one in which sacrifices worthy of Him were offered. The glory of the Lord was manifested in it. The Holy Scriptures are full of passages which celebrated the august prerogatives of this, the only House of God—so many titles, it would seem, whereby to engage our Lord to preserve, even to the end of time, a monument to which so many religious mementos were attached! Yet He did not save it: the Temple was destroyed throughout, God showing us by this example that His justice spares nothing when He has resolved to strike, and that the objects of His former predilection experience the effects of His holy severity even more rigorously than others. Who, then, can rely on the favours He has received from heaven, or on the virtues with which His soul may be adorned, and slumber in presumptuous confidence, and neglect self-

watchfulness? O my God, penetrate my soul with these terrible truths; grant that I may labour at my salvation with that sentiment of humility which never feels that it has done enough; teach me to profit by Thy graces with that respectful fear which trembles to lose them, and looking on myself as a most useless servant, to expect from Thee alone the gift of perseverance. Thou dost refuse nothing, O Father of mercies, to a humble heart, to a confiding and fervent soul, whose only hope is in Thee.

2nd Point.—The cause of the destruction of the Temple.

Why was the Temple of Jerusalem destroyed? Because the services of religion practised there had become mere empty ceremonies, destitute of all interior worship. It was above all because the Jews had rejected the Messias, and doing so broken the chain of graces which, in uniting them to Him, could alone make them participators in His merits. An interior spirit and union with Jesus are therefore the two conditions without which our homage and services cannot be acceptable to God. I ought, in consequence, to apply myself unceasingly to the practice of interior virtues of humility, purity of intention, a sincere desire to please God, and zeal for His glory; I ought to unite myself more closely each day to Jesus by conformity of sentiments, of affections, of will, and of conduct to His. By acting thus, I shall be sure of pleasing God, and of never being rejected by Him. Can this infinitely good Father refrain from being pleased with all that is like unto His well-beloved Son? He gave Him to us to be our model, He has commanded us to listen to Him, and Jesus tells us that He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. O divine Way which can never lead us astray; infallible Truth, instruct all upright hearts; adorable Life, which preserves us from sin, grant that I may unite myself to Thee, and through Thee find grace before the Father of mercies.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us adore Him as our God, our Saviour, as our Model, and as the Stay of our hope.

Let us thank Him for having borne with us, notwithstanding our unfaithfulness and ingratitude, and beg of Him never to reject us. Let us ask Him for the interior spirit, the grace to imitate Him, to unite ourselves to Him, and to offer to His Father through Him a worship worthy of His infinite Majesty.

Resolution.—To do all our actions in union with Jesus.

Offering of the Resolution, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet. — Lord, without Thee I can do nothing. Jesus, our Way and our Life, have mercy on us.

Prayer.—Receive, O Lord, etc., page 43.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CLXXIII.

JESUS FORETELLS THE END OF THE WORLD.

'Jesus said to His disciples: When, therefore, you shall see the abomination of desolation, which was spoken of by Daniel the Prophet, standing in the holy place; he that readeth, let him understand. Then they that are in Judea, let them flee to the mountains.'—MATT. xxiv. 15, 16.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—Represent to yourself Mount Olivet, where our Lord is seated with His disciples.

2*nd Prelude.*—Grant me grace, O my God, to profit by the salutary warnings on which I am going to meditate.

1*st Point.*—We ought to listen attentively to what Jesus teaches us.

'He that readeth, let him understand' (Matt. xxiv. 15). The words mark for us the importance of the warnings which are to follow, warnings of which the understanding is not given to everyone, at least, not that penetrating intelligence which touches the heart and brings about salvation. The matter concerned is a most decisive event, which brings in its train the consummation of all things,

and which is to decide the eternal lot of all the inhabitants of the earth. Oh, how important it is to meditate on all its circumstances with serious attention! 'He that readeth, let him understand.' Jesus wishes our souls to be penetrated with the things He is about to announce to us; let us then listen with respect to His divine voice. O my Saviour, engrave Thyself in the depths of my soul all that Thou desirest I should know! I bless Thee, O Lord, for having already so frequently favoured me with the vivid lights Thou dost communicate to Thy friends alone. I was not worthy of them, and have profited ill thereof; yet, O my God, I dare to beg of Thee to increase them within my soul, and I hope that in Thy infinite goodness Thou wilt hear me.

2nd Point.—Jesus teaches us to fly from the scandals of the world.

'When therefore you shall see the abomination of desolation which was spoken of by Daniel the Prophet. . . Then they that are in Judea, let them flee to the mountains' (Matt. xxiv. 15, 16). The first warning regards the approaching destruction of Jerusalem; it may equally be applied to the circumstances which will precede the end of the world, and even to the dangers by which we are at present surrounded, if taken in a figurative sense. Is not the abomination of desolation in the holy place when a prodigious number of souls whom God has created to His own image, to make of them His temples and the dearest objects of His predilection, give themselves up to Satan, and to the commission of all sorts of sins? 'Let them that are in Judea,' says our Saviour, 'flee to the mountains.' Judea here stands for the world, and above all for its spirit; the mountains are holy aspirations towards God, recollection, the practice of the Spirit of faith, and other interior virtues, which in drawing us to God raise us above our own weakness, and cause us to escape the contagion by which we are surrounded. A mediocre virtue will not suffice in an age where all is

dangerous to salvation; great courage is required, and generous efforts, which, drawing down on us powerful graces, will enable us to escape innumerable perils. O my God, grant that I may faithfully put to profit Thy salutary warnings.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us thank Him for the warnings He is pleased to give us. Let us beg of Him to make us feel their importance, and to grant us the grace to escape the dangers which threaten us. Let us pray for the number of poor sinners who run blindly to their ruin. Let us ask Him for strength to embrace the practice of the good that has been made known to us.

Resolutions.—To combat generously the passion which causes us to commit the most faults. To pray to God by frequent ejaculatory prayers that we may be preserved from the illusions of the world.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—Grant me, O my God, to comprehend these words: 'He that readeth, let him understand' (Matt. xxiv. 15).

Prayer.—Pater Noster.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CLXXIV.

CONTINUATION OF THE SAME SUBJECT.

'For there shall be great tribulation, such as hath not been from the beginning of the world until now, neither shall be . . . Then if any man shall say to you: Lo, here is the Christ, or there, do not believe him. For there shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders, insomuch as to deceive (if possible) even the elect . . . For as lightning cometh out of the east, and appeareth even unto the west, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be.'—MATT. xxiv. 21, seq.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—As before, page 179.

2nd Prelude.—Preserve me, O Lord, from being seduced, by attaching me firmly to Thy Church.

1st Point.—The false prophets are the devil, the world, and ourselves.

'There shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders, insomuch as to deceive (if possible) even the elect' (Matt. xxiv. 24). The literal accomplishment of this prophecy regards principally the epoch of the destruction of Jerusalem, and that of the end of the world; but it contains instructions suitable for all times. Let us, then, interpret it in the sense which will be the most profitable to us. False Christs and false prophets are in general all those who insinuate to us false doctrines, or a morality contrary to the spirit of the Gospel. Thus, heresy with its deceptions, the world with its snares, our own mind, full of its illusions, the wicked spirit with his crafts, are so many false prophets who seek to lead us astray. They exhibit great signs and wonders, insomuch as to seduce, if possible, even the elect; they satisfy our pride, excite our passions, flatter our inclinations, trouble our reason, and promise us a fleeting happiness; but if we be faithful, all these means of seduction will be powerless against us. O Jesus, Thou art my only hope, my light, and my strength; with Thee I can do all things, but nothing without Thee.

2nd Point.—That we may not be deceived, we must attach ourselves to the Church and practise all she teaches.

'As lightning cometh out of the east and appeareth even unto the west, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be. Wheresoever the body shall be, there shall the eagles also be gathered together' (Matt. xxiv. 27, 28). These mysterious words signify, according to the interpreters, the visibility, the unity, and the universality of the Holy Roman Church, the alone true Church of Jesus Christ, to which all those who wish to escape seduction should adhere unflinchingly. We are the children of this

holy Church; we believe all that she teaches; so long as we shall persevere in our faith, we shall triumph over the attacks of heresy and impiety; but this is not enough; we must furthermore be faithful to fulfil the duties imposed on us by the moral teaching of the Church; the false prophets who address themselves to the heart are as dangerous as those that seek to seduce the mind. O my Jesus, preserve me from both the one and the other; make me relish the holy severity of Thy Gospel; never allow me to admit those false interpretations of Thy sacred words which the spirit of the world seeks to give in order to reconcile them with the interests of its passions. Never permit me, O my God, to share in such errors; teach me to feed my soul with Thy pure doctrine, explained and developed by the Catholic Church, which alone has received Thy Spirit to conduct us safely to salvation.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us thank Him anew for the instructions which He gives us. Let us pray to Him to give us an upright mind and a pure heart, that so we may relish the truth and despise the vain seductions of the wicked spirits. Let us, above all, ask Him for grace to conform our conduct to the lights which shall be given us. Let us pray to Him for those unhappy souls who allow themselves to be seduced, and run blindly on in the way of perdition.

Resolution.—To follow generously the interior voice of our conscience, that we may escape seduction.

Offering of the Resolution, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—O my Jesus! be Thou my Light and my Strength.

Prayer.—Soul of Christ, etc., page 4.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CLXXV.

CONTINUATION OF THE SAME SUBJECT.

'Men shall wither away for fear and expectation of what shall come upon the whole world; for the powers of heaven shall be moved. And then they shall see the Son of Man coming in a cloud, with great power and majesty. But when these things begin to come to pass, look up, and lift your heads, because your redemption is at hand.—LUKE xxi. 26, seq.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—Represent to yourself the general destruction of nature, and behold our Lord in His majesty coming down from heaven.

2*nd Prelude.*—O my Jesus, grant me grace to save my soul, cost what it may, that so I may be numbered with the elect when Thou shalt come to judge the world.

1*st Point.*—The terror and consternation of sinners, and the peace and confidence of the just.

'Men shall wither away for fear and expectation of what shall come to pass. Look up, and lift up your heads, because your redemption is at hand' (Luke xxi. 26, 28). The coming of the Sovereign Judge will produce very different effects in the souls of sinners and in those of the just. The former will have to await eternal confusion and a sentence of death; they will also be filled with fear and oppressed with grief; all the false reasons which they shall have alleged during life in defence of their crimes will then disappear; those who shall have satisfied themselves at the expense of their conscience; those who voluntarily have abused grace, and have become gradually blinded and hardened; those who, knowing their duty, have acted against that knowledge for fear of displeasing men, will then see their folly; but it will be too late, time will be no more, eternity will commence. On the other hand, what will be the position of the just who shall have had the courage to serve God, notwithstanding

their bad propensities and the obstacles of all kinds they shall have encountered? How heartily they will then congratulate themselves on having taken Jesus for their Model and consecrated themselves to His love! The earth shall be shaken to its very foundations, but the hearts of the just, fixed in peace, shall no longer be troubled on that account; the stars shall fall from heaven, but their souls shall remain immovable, and shall furthermore call forth in desire the consoling future, and shall bless the dawn of that day which is to know no end. I shall most certainly be present at that decisive scene; but shall I be among the number of the elect, or with the wicked? The choice depends on myself.

2nd Point.—Our judgments during life are very different to what they will be at the last day.

When a dark night almost entirely obscures the colour and form of things, they are distinguished with difficulty, and we are often deceived in our judgments regarding them; but when the sun enlightens them with his rays, all their beauty or their deformity appears unveiled. It is thus with all that relates to salvation. On earth we are enveloped in the darkness which sin has brought into our mind and heart; good things often seem bad to us, and bad things seem good; but at the last day, when all will be illuminated by the light of God, our judgments will be very different. We shall then comprehend that the most appalling catastrophes, the sharpest pains, even all miseries united, are a less evil than the least venial sin, since the latter offends God and lessens our eternal happiness, whilst the former can have no effects beyond this life. We shall understand that a single act of virtue is infinitely preferable to all this world's pleasures, since they pass away, while the recompense of the former will last for ever. In fine, we shall understand that the interests of time are nothing compared to those of eternity. . . . Why should I not now judge of things as I shall judge of them then? . . .

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us adore Him as our Judge —a Judge who is at the same time our Saviour, and whose loving Heart desires infinitely that we should render ourselves worthy of a blissful verdict. Let us ask Him for the gift of a lively faith, which will lead us to judge of all things now as we shall then judge of them, and thus to work out our salvation, cost what it may. If we have to reproach ourselves with any resistance to this sacred light, let us ask His pardon for it, and promise Him from our heart to profit by it in future. Let us commend our souls into the Hands and Sacred Heart of Jesus, that so He may Himself prepare it for a favourable judgment.

Resolutions.—To be faithful to grace. To combat generously the inclinations and repugnances that may oppose us in the accomplishment of our duties.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—I have only one soul, and I am resolved, with the help of God, to save it, cost what it may.

Prayer.—Receive, O Lord, etc., page 43.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

CONTEMPLATION CLXXVI.

THE LAST JUDGMENT.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—'And there shall be signs in the sun and in the moon and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations by reason of the confusion of the roaring of the sea and of the waves, men withering away for fear and expectation of what shall come upon the whole world. For the powers of the heavens shall be moved, and then they shall see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with great power and majesty. And He shall send His angels with a trumpet and a great voice; and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from the furthest

parts of the heavens to the utmost bounds of them' (Luke xxi. 25-27, Matt. xxiv. 31).

2nd Prelude.—Represent to yourself the general destruction of nature as announced in the Sacred Scriptures.

3rd Prelude.—Grant me grace, O my God, to prepare myself with care for the terrible day of the last judgment.

1st and 2nd Points.—Behold the persons, and consider the actions.

In the first place, men affrighted and seized with terror, for the sun is darkened, the moon is without light, the stars are falling, and all nature is in the convulsions of her last agony. . . . In a brief space every inhabitant of the earth is stricken with death. . . . What a frightful solitude! . . . The judgment trumpet resounds from the four quarters of the world. . . . The dust of the tombs is agitated. . . . An innumerable number of bodies are formed, and at the same instant their souls retake possession of them, never more to be separated from them. . . . A bright cloud appears in the heavens, coming down towards the earth. . . . It is the throne of the Son of God. . . . What glory! . . . What majesty! . . . His Cross is borne before Him in triumph. . . . The angels bring with them the book of the holy Gospels, and the awful book of consciences, whose secrets are about to be publicly manifested. . . . Countless generations, more numerous than the grains of sand which strew the sea-shore, are assembled together at the feet of the Sovereign Judge. . . . He commands His angels to separate His elect from the reprobate, as a shepherd separates His sheep from the goats. . . . This division is made in an instant; the good are placed on His right hand, the wicked on the left; all await their judgment.

3rd Point.—Listen to the words.

It is Jesus, the Sovereign Judge, the King of Glory, Who is about to speak. He addresses Himself to the just first, saying: 'Come, ye blessed of My Father' (Matt. xxv. 34). . . . Why, my divine Saviour,

this title so full of sweetness? . . . Ah! I understand why; Thy elect will have imitated Thee; they will have been united to Thee during life; for which reason Thy Father will own them and bless them on this great day. . . . 'Come and possess the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world' (Matt. xxv. 34). This kingdom belongs to Me; I have conquered it by My sufferings and death, but I do not wish to enjoy it alone. You are My living members; you have generously shared in the combats of your Head: share now in His triumph. Come not only to inhabit, but to possess the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. . . . What ineffable joy will inundate the souls of the elect at this moment! They will intone a hymn of gratitude in union with the heavenly spirits. Let us consider now the consternation of the wicked: 'Depart from me, ye cursed' (Matt. xxv. 41). . . . What an awful sentence, to be separated from Jesus, and for all eternity! . . . Go! . . . Whither shall they go, O Lord? . . . 'Into everlasting fire, which was prepared for the devil and his angels' (Matt. xxv. 41). . . . Let us meditate on the overwhelming results of these words for the unhappy victims of sin; let us compare their situation with that of the just, and ask ourselves if difficulties in the practice of virtue ought to stop us, when we shall of necessity hear one or other of these sentences one day pronounced for or against us.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us throw ourselves with entire confidence into the arms of His mercy, and beg of Him as earnestly as we possibly can to help us to ward off the blows of His justice by profiting by His mercy. Let us thank Him for still giving us the time to merit a favourable sentence. Let us beg of Him to impress upon us so strongly the fear of His judgments that we may each day work out our salvation with renewed ardour and courage.

Resolution.—To labour to overcome ourselves in that which costs us the most.

Offering of the Resolution, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—Time is short, but eternity will never end. I am not made for this world, but for the next.

Prayer.—Receive, O Lord, etc., page 43.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

APPLICATION OF THE SENSES CLXXVII.

THE SAME SUBJECT.

1*st*, 2*nd and* 3*rd Preludes.*—Same as before, pages 186, 187.

1*st Point.*—Sight.

Let us consider attentively the dread array of the last judgment . . . the glory of Jesus . . . His brilliant throne . . . the light which surrounds Him . . . the ministering angels . . . all generations assembled together at His feet. . . . What dread, what confusion, what anxiety is portrayed on the features of the reprobate! . . . But on the countenances of the just, what peace, what pure joy! . . . Let us also behold the heavens opening above our heads . . . and the abyss of hell ready to swallow up the wicked.

2*nd Point.*—Hearing.

Let us hearken to the piercing and prolonged sound of the judgment trumpet which calls forth all the dead from their sepulchres . . . afterwards, to the canticles of the heavenly spirits . . . to the sentence of the Sovereign Judge . . . to the shrieks of the reprobate and the demons . . . then to the songs of love and acts of thanksgiving which the just will commence, never to bring them to an end.

3*rd Point.*—Smell.

Let us inhale by turns the infection which proceeds from the mass of the reprobate. It is the odour of their numberless sins which have stained and cor-

rupted their souls . . . the smoke arising from the infernal abyss . . . and the celestial perfume sent forth from the souls of the elect. . . . Oh! how freely and delightfully we breathe near them! . . but the empoisoned air of the wicked suffocates us and horrifies us. . . . O my God, grant that from this moment my soul may be sweetly attracted by the odour of virtue, and repelled by the infection of vice.

4th Point.—Taste.

Let us taste the sweet peace and pure delights with which the souls of the elect will be flooded. . . . They are to possess God, and for ever. . . . The insupportable bitterness which is the lot of the reprobate; no more love, no more hope, no longer anything but hatred, rage, most cruel and eternal remorse.

5th Point.—Touch.

Let us draw near to those horrible furnaces—those pools of sulphur, of fire and brimstone. . . . Could we endure to feel them for one single instant? Let us follow the elect to their eternal dwellings; but let us stop at the entrance, kiss with respect the threshold of our heavenly country, and pray to our Lord to grant that we may one day, by His grace, arrive at it.

Colloquy, *Resolutions*, *Offering*, *Spiritual Bouquet*, *Prayer* and *Examen*, as in the preceding Contemplation.

MEDITATION CLXXVIII.

MATTER OF THE JUDGMENT: ITS JUSTICE.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude.—Same as before, page 186.

2nd Prelude.—Grant me grace, O Jesus, to prepare myself with care for the rigorous account I shall have to render to Thee of all my life.

1*st Point.*—The matter of the judgment.

Our Lord will judge all mankind upon six principal points: 1st. On the sins they shall have committed; the number of which will be exactly reckoned. 2nd. On those they shall have been the cause of by their bad example, their bad advice, their scandals, etc. 3rd. On the sins they shall not have prevented when they could, although obliged to prevent them by their state and position. 4th. On the good they might have done, but have left undone. 5th. On the good they have hindered being accomplished. 6th. Lastly, on the good they shall have done badly, namely, from a bad motive, as from human respect, from the desire of the esteem and praise of creatures, from ambition, etc. . . . or by inordinately following their own will in opposition to the will of God, as is the case in certain works of piety or practices of penance contrary to obedience, or which prevent us from fulfilling the duties of the state in which Providence has placed us. O my God, I cannot doubt it; Thou wilt one day examine me on all these points; grant that I may anticipate the rigour of Thy judgments during the period of this life, which is that of Thy mercy; give me the light of Thy Holy Spirit, that I may judge myself; give me fidelity to correct all that is blameworthy in me, that so at the last day I may present myself before Thee with confidence.

2*nd Point.*—The justice of the judgment.

Men judge according to appearances, but God judges according to justice; He knows perfectly the good and bad inclinations which each one has brought with him into the world; the number, the greatness, and the exact degree of the graces which He gives to each, both to increase the former and overcome the latter. He knows thoroughly the advantages and dangers of the different positions in which He places us; He measures out our temptations, never permitting that they should be beyond our strength; He appreciates exactly the force of a good or bad will, of the efforts we make to second His grace, of the malice with which we

resist it, of the cowardice by which we neglect it. He knows all, He reckons up all, and at the last day He will pronounce a sentence which shall be acknowledged by all His creatures to be just. After these considerations, can I find consolation in thinking of the evil which is committed by many people, promising myself to obtain from our Lord an indulgence He may perhaps grant to them on account of their ignorance, the violence of their temptations, or other similar reasons, but which He would refuse to me, because I should have no such excuses to offer Him? Preserve me, O Lord, from the rash presumption which would lead me to judge my neighbour, whether to condemn him or to make of his conduct an occasion of scandal. To Thee alone, O God, infinitely just, belongs the right to judge us, because Thou alone knowest all things; grant, then, that I may walk before Thee with an upright and sincere heart, and that I may place my confidence in Thy infinite goodness, which considers our least efforts, and always proportions Thy assistance to our needs.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us adore Him as our Judge, and ask Him for that fear accompanied with love which is a gift of His Spirit. Let us beg Him to give us grace not to judge others, but to turn all our severity against ourselves, in order to render our life pure in His sight, and thus to have part in His mercies.

Resolution.—To watch over ourselves carefully, that so we may avoid the smallest faults, and accomplish faithfully all our duties.

Offering of the Resolution, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—God sees me; God hears me; God will judge me.

Prayer.—Pater Noster.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CLXXIX.

OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE JUDGMENT.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—Same as before, page 186.

2*nd Prelude.*—Grant me grace, O God, always to serve Thee with great fervour.

1*st Point.*—An exact account of all will be taken.

It is an article of faith that if we die in a state of grace, we shall be saved; but if death should surprise us in mortal sin, though we may be guilty of only one, we shall be lost for ever. The judgment God will pronounce will be according to this rule; yet we should be wrong to believe that it matters little whether we do much or little good, provided we save our souls; God will reckon up exactly our smallest acts of virtue. He will weigh in the balance of the sanctuary the degree of merit we shall have acquired, the measure of the recompense it will be just to award us. The more we shall have loved Him during life, the closer shall we be united to Jesus, His beloved Son, by the conformity of our sentiments, our will, and our actions, and the greater will be our recompense. O my God, I firmly believe this truth; why then am I so negligent in Thy holy service? Why do I allow so many precious opportunities to escape me of exercising myself in the practice of virtue, and of making my crown more brilliant? Alas! it is because my faith is too weak. Increase it, O Lord, and grant me grace to act conformably with my belief.

2*nd Point.*—The judgment will be without appeal.

When a criminal is condemned by human justice, he may sometimes obtain the suspension of his sentence, and a further examination of his cause, if some person of distinction will take an interest in his case. He can beg of him to take some steps in his favour, and solicit his pardon. It will not be thus with the judgments of God. The con-

demned sinner will no longer have any resource ; the sentence once pronounced will be irrevocable ; if it be a sentence of happiness, what joy ! what safety ! to enter into heaven, and to be certain of never losing it ! . . . But if it be a sentence of death, what despair ! what remorse ! what useless regrets : never will the terrible sentence be revoked. I am now at liberty, O my God, to choose between these two destinies ; nothing can prevent me from being Thine, if I will it sincerely ; why then do I allow the sayings of others to influence me ? Their words pass away, and they themselves pass away also, and if I lose my soul to please them, they will not come forward to defend me before Thy sacred tribunal. My Lord ! I will, by Thy grace, save my soul ; I wish to be Thine ; I desire to love and serve Thee at any cost.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us pour forth our heart in His presence with abandonment and confidence, begging Him to prepare us Himself for His judgment. Let us ask Him for grace to persevere unto the end in His divine love. Let us also pray for the many unhappy sinners who are preparing for themselves a terrible judgment, by living in forgetfulness of their salvation.

Resolution.—To make generously every effort and every sacrifice necessary to ensure our salvation.

Offering of the Resolution, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—Time is short, eternity will never have an end.

Prayer.—Receive, O Lord, etc., page 43.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CLXXX.

THE ADVICE OF OUR LORD ON THE JUDGMENT.

'Amen, I say to you, that this generation shall not pass away, until all these things be done. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My word shall not pass away . . . Take ye heed, watch and pray; for ye know not when the time is.'—MARK xiii. 30, seq.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—Represent to yourself the Mount of Olives; our Lord is seated there with His disciples.

2*nd Prelude.*—Grant me grace, O Lord, to watch and pray without ceasing, that so I may not be surprised unawares by Thy coming.

1*st Point.*—We shall be judged at the last day: this is a certain truth.

'Amen I say to you that this generation shall not pass away until all these things be done. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My word shall not pass away' (Mark xiii. 30, 31). It is certain that I shall be present at the general judgment; however distant this great event may now seem to be, every instant brings it closer; sooner or later it will arrive. If I have missed the great affair of my salvation, this day will be for me a day of terror and grief, but if I have served God, if I have loved Jesus, and proved my love by its results, this day will be for me the day of my triumph and glory. If our adorable Saviour, Who will then be our judge, will be terrible, He will be so only as regards sinners; His faithful servants will fly to death, as to the arms of His goodness, and the surroundings of the last judgment will not be able to cause them any fear, since their eternal destiny, already fixed, will ensure them eternal peace and happiness; without uneasiness about themselves, they will rejoice in the magnificent spectacle of the glory of Jesus Christ. Oh!

how ravished with joy they will be to see Him adored by all creatures, and recognised as King in the day of His power and majesty! . . . Divine Jesus, the assurance which Thou dost give us of the accomplishment of Thy predictions, far from causing me terror, ought to be the object of my dearest hopes. I love Thee, O Lord, and I wish to love Thee always; how can I fear to have Thee for my Judge?

2nd Point.—How we ought to prepare for judgment.

'Take heed of yourselves, lest perhaps your hearts be over-charged with surfeiting and drunkenness and the cares of this life; and that day come upon you suddenly. For as a snare it shall come upon all that sit upon the face of the whole earth. Watch ye, therefore, praying at all times that you may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that are to come, and to stand before the Son of man' (Luke xxi. 34, seq.). A passing fervour is not sufficient to prepare me for the great day of general judgment; a constant fidelity is required, which perseveres at times of trial, and resists temptations. I must not then limit myself to feelings, which are more the work of grace than the result of my good-will; but I ought to labour with courage to render my conduct conformable to the holy desires with which our Lord inspires me; I ought to combat nature, to sacrifice my dearest inclinations if they place obstacles in the way of my salvation; I ought to keep my heart disengaged from the world by the practice of mortification, especially interior mortification; I ought to attach myself to God, and if it be necessary detach myself from all else. Lord, grant me Thy help, and I will profit by the salutary warnings on which Thou givest me the grace now to meditate.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us thank Him for the holy instructions which He has pleased to give us. Let us beg of Him to render them profitable to us, by raising us up above the things of this world, and inspiring us with a holy ardour to seek those of heaven. Let us offer

Him generously the sacrifice of all that could be an obstacle to our sanctification, and hinder us from appearing with confidence before the tribunal of His justice.

Resolution.—Let us do all our actions with as much care and desire to please God as if we had to appear before Him immediately after having performed them.

Offering of the Resolution, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—The God Who is to be my Judge is now my Father and my Saviour. Heart of Jesus, my only hope, have mercy on me.

Prayer.—Pater Noster.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CLXXXI.

PARABLE OF THE TEN VIRGINS.

'Then shall the kingdom of heaven be like to ten virgins, who, taking their lamps, went out to meet the bridegroom and the bride. And five of them were foolish, and five were wise. But the five foolish, having taken their lamps, did not take oil with them. But the wise took oil in their vessels with the lamps.'—MATT. xxv. 1-4.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude*, same as before, page 195.

2*nd Prelude.*—Divine Jesus, grant me grace to render my faith active by the practice of good works.

1*st Point.*—The folly of sinners, and prudence of the just during this life.

'Then shall the kingdom of heaven be like to ten virgins, who, taking their lamps, went out to meet the bridegroom and the bride. And five of them were foolish, and five were wise. But the five foolish, having taken their lamps, did not take oil with them. But the wise took oil in their vessels with the lamps. And the bridegroom tarrying, they all slumbered and slept'

(Matt. xxv. 1-5). Our Lord in this parable places before us the state of Christians on the earth: they are represented by the ten virgins; the nuptials to which they are invited is the happiness of heaven, where the Son of God will for all eternity celebrate His alliance with His Church. It is with this holy bride that we are to await His coming, which is the moment of death; the lamps lighted are the symbol of faith; the oil denotes the good works necessary in order that our faith may justify us. The ten wise virgins were careful to provide themselves with oil; the foolish did not think about it; the sleep, to which they all gave themselves up while awaiting the spouse, marks the security, well or ill founded, in which we live. Reflect! if the foolish virgins had known to what they exposed themselves for the want of a little precaution! if they had, at least, on seeing the wise virgins take oil, imitated them! But no, they make no reflections so useful; they are devoid of prudence. Is not this senseless conduct also mine? What care do I take to exercise myself in the practice of solid virtue, in the performance of good works, and in rendering my life meritorious for heaven? Divine Jesus, perhaps Thou wilt come soon; what a misfortune for me, if Thou shouldst not find me ready! O Lord, never permit this; give me prudence, and help me to get ready.

2nd Point.—The joy of the just, and the consternation of sinners at the hour of death.

'And at midnight there was a cry made: Behold the bridegroom cometh; go ye forth to meet him. Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said to the wise: Give us of your oil, for our lamps are gone out. The wise answered, saying: Lest perhaps there be not enough for us and for you, go you rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. Now whilst they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage, and the door was shut' (Matt. xxv. 6-10). During life, the sinners and

the just, the tepid and the fervent, are together; at the moment of death, those who shall not have served God will awake from their slumbering, and will behold the danger of their state; but it will be too late; sinners will not be able to share in the merits acquired by the just, their regret will be useless, the door of the marriage-chamber will be eternally closed against them, and their pleadings will receive no other answer than those awful words of the Son of God: 'Depart from Me; I know you not.' What despair! what grief! to have been called by God Himself to the happiness of beholding Him in heaven, to have had within reach every means of reaching heaven, and to be excluded through our own fault! O my Jesus! never let this misfortune be mine! enlighten me regarding my real interests; grant that I may value the means of salvation Thou dost offer me, and make me faithful in practising them.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us thank Him for having vouchsafed to warn us of the danger which threatens us, if we do not labour in earnest to ensure our salvation. Let us ask Him for the grace of watchfulness and Christian prudence. Let us beg Him to forgive us all our past negligence, and not permit us to remain longer in tepidity. Let us also pray for all those who do not labour to work out their salvation.

Resolution.—To do all our actions for God.

Offering of the Resolution, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—'Behold the bridegroom cometh.'

Prayer.—Soul of Christ, etc., page 4.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CLXXXII.

PARABLE OF THE TALENTS.

'For, even as a man, going into a far country, called his servants and delivered to them his goods. And to one he gave five talents, and to another two, and to another one; to every one according to his proper ability: and immediately he set out on his journey.' —MATT. xxv. 14, 15.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—Still represent to yourself the Mount of Olives, and our Lord sitting in the midst of His disciples.

2*nd Prelude.*—Grant me grace, O Lord, to use faithfully for Thy glory all the talents Thou hast confided to me.

1*st Point.*—The gifts of nature and grace are talents we are to use faithfully and to increase.

God created us for His glory; all the natural and supernatural gifts with which He has been pleased to endow us are so many talents which we ought to use faithfully and carefully. I ought in consequence to refer to the service and glory of our Lord all that is in me, and all that belongs to me: fortune, reputation, life, health, wit, talents, virtuous dispositions; in a word, everything. It is not to draw on myself the esteem of creatures, nor to procure a happy existence according to the ideas of the world by yielding to my inclinations and satisfying my desires, that our Lord has confided His gifts to me; but they are so many means He gives me to extend His reign by sanctifying myself and labouring to make Him known and loved according to my ability. It is for the same end He adds to natural talents, those infinitely more precious of His grace: holy instructions, sacraments, good example, interior lights and attractions, the inspirations of His grace, etc. Am I faithful in putting all these to profit? If God at this moment were to demand an account of them from me, what should I have to offer Him? The idle servant who stored away his Master's talent without putting it out to interest is

punished; what, then, am I to expect if I have not even kept it? Yet my case is not desperate; God still gives me the present time to repair my losses by contrition and love; O my divine Jesus, give me both these sentiments, and grant me mercy.

2nd Point.—God will demand from us an account of the gifts He shall have given us.

'To one He gave five talents, to another two, and to another one' (Matt. xxv. 15). God dispenses His gifts with wisdom; He proportions them to the different designs He has over each one of us; whence it comes that the measure and the nature of His graces are not the same for all. But that which ought to encourage me to serve Him with fervour is that He will only demand an account of the graces and talents He shall have bestowed, and that, provided they have been made good use of, the recompense of that use will be received by His faithful servants. The servant who had received five talents had gained other five; he who had received but two had gained but two; but as both servants had gained all that the Lord expected, they receive the same words from Him: 'Well done, good and faithful servant; because thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will place thee over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord' (Matt. xxv. 23). How can I refrain from esteeming myself happy to belong to a God infinitely just, who measures His rewards, not by the number and extent of our services, but according to our fidelity? How can I refrain from serving so good a Master with confidence, abandonment, and spiritual joy? O my God, I know that thou dost not exact anything of me beyond my capacity, and Thy grace supplies my weakness; place, then, within me all the virtues and good dispositions Thou desirest for me; give me what Thou commandest, and command what Thou pleasest. In Thee I place all my hope; I shall never be confounded.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us adore Him as our Master. Let us from our heart bless His wisdom and His

goodness, which guide Him in the distribution of His graces. Let us thank Him for all His gifts to us, begging His pardon for the little care we have taken to use them profitably, and asking for His grace to do better in future.

Resolutions.—To follow faithfully all the inspirations of grace, and to do all our actions for God.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—'Unto whomsoever much is given, of him much shall be required' (Luke xii. 48).

Prayer.—Receive, O Lord, etc., page 43.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

CONTEMPLATION CLXXXIII.

PREPARATION FOR THE LAST SUPPER. THE CRIME OF JUDAS.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—'Now the feast of unleavened bread, which was called the Pasch, was at hand. And the chief priests and the scribes sought how they might put Jesus to death. . . . Now Judas went and discoursed with them and the magistrates, how he might betray Him to them. . . And the day of the unleavened bread came. . . And Jesus sent Peter and John, saying: Go and prepare for us the Pasch, that we may eat (Luke xxii. 1-8).

2*nd Prelude.*—Represent to yourself the dwelling of the High Priest, the streets of Jerusalem, and the supper-room.

3*rd Prelude.*—Divine Jesus, discover to me the immensity of Thy love, and grant me grace to correspond to it with all the love of which my heart is capable.

1*st Point.*—Consider the persons.

All the inhabitants of Jerusalem preparing to eat the Pasch; they know not that a new Pasch is about to be substituted for the ancient one. . . . The angels look down from the highest heavens on what is passing . . . they are in admiration, for God has

revealed to them the prodigies of grace which Jesus is soon to operate in our favour. . . . The council of the High Priest is assembled; let us behold their sinister countenances. . . . Judas is on the road, agitated by a thousand different feelings; his conscience declaims against the crime he is about to commit. . . . During this time, Jesus is occupied only with the designs of His love; He is meditating the institution of the Blessed Eucharist: Oh! what emotions crowd together in His adorable Heart! . . .

2nd Point.—Listen to the words:

Those uttered by the chiefs of the priests: We must do away with this man, but what means are we to take? If we arrest Him on the festival day it may excite a tumult among the people . . . They are embarrassed. . . . Judas presents himself and removes the difficulty, by saying: 'What will you give me, and I will deliver Him unto you?' (Matt. xxvi. 15.) Satan, who presided at this wicked council, hears the horrible proposal: it fills him with hellish joy. . . . Heaven has also heard it. . . . Jesus knows all that is being planned against Him, but His love surpasses the malice of His enemies. Let us listen to what He says to His apostles: 'Go and prepare for us the Pasch, that we may eat' (Luke xxii. 8). Even until death He will be a faithful observer of the law. . . . The disciples ask: 'Where wilt Thou that we prepare? And He said to them: Behold, as you go into the city, there shall meet you a man carrying a pitcher of water: follow him into the house where he entereth in. And you shall say to the good-man of the house: The master saith to thee: Where is the guest-chamber where I may eat the Pasch with my disciples? And he will show you a large dining-room furnished, and there prepare' (Luke xxii. 9-12). Here, the dispositions are indicated to us, which Jesus wishes to find in the souls who receive Him; these souls ought to be great by their generosity and their love, raised by holy recollection above created things, adorned with every

virtue. . . . Let us now hearken to the interior words which Jesus addresses to His Father: He speaks to Him of His apostles, of His disciples, of myself. . . . What shall I say in my turn to thank Him for so much love and goodness?

3rd Point.—Consider the actions.

The infernal cabal of the chief priests . . . the workings of the wicked spirit in those hardened hearts, which he possesses as he pleases; he excites in these wretches hatred and rage, and blinds them more and more. . . . Let us consider also the crime of Judas . . . then let us turn our eyes away from the vile traitor. . . . Let us behold our divine Jesus giving His orders for the preparation of the last supper. . . . With what zeal, promptitude, and punctuality Peter and John execute the orders of their Lord. . . . They present themselves before him whom Jesus has pointed out to them . . . happy host . . . what prodigies are about to be worked in thy house! Thou dost renew these wonders, O Jesus, in those who, being well prepared, partake of Thy banquet; grant me grace ever to approach thereto with piety and fervour.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us adore Him with the most profound respect and tender love: in this moment when men are thinking of taking away His life, He is occupied with nothing but overwhelming them with graces. Let us beg of Him to make known to us the immense treasures of charity contained within His divine Heart. Let us grieve for so little loving a Saviour Who loves us so much. Let us ask Him for His holy love and great fervour in His service.

Resolution.—To imbue our souls with the love of Jesus, so that it may become the motive of all our actions.

Offering of the Resolution, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—My Saviour has loved me with an infinite love.

Prayer.—Soul of Christ, etc., page 4.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CLXXXIV.

JESUS DESIRES ARDENTLY TO LAY DOWN HIS LIFE FOR US.

'And when the hour was come, He sat down, and the twelve apostles with Him. And He said to them: With desire I have desired to eat this Pasch with you before I suffer.'—LUKE xxii. 14-16.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—Represent to yourself the supper-room, where our Lord is at table with His disciples.

2*nd Prelude.*—Divine Jesus, grant that I may understand how greatly Thou desirest to unite Thyself to me, and that I on my part may have no other desire than to unite myself to Thee.

1*st Point.*—Jesus desires ardently to give Himself to us in the Holy Eucharist.

'With desire I have desired to eat this Pasch with you' (Luke xxii. 15). Who is He that utters these words? what do they express? to whom are they addressed? He who speaks them is Jesus, our adorable Saviour, come down from heaven to repair our losses, overwhelm us with His gifts, and procure happiness for us. He speaks them at the moment when He is about to give us two striking proofs of His infinite love by the institution of the mysteries of our altars, and the accomplishment of that of Calvary. His words express the excess of love which fills His adorable Heart; a love which has consumed His from the first instant of His birth, and which, at this moment, has attained a degree of strength which presses upon Him and causes Him to undergo a kind of violence, until He shall have given all by giving up Himself for the happy objects of His affection. 'With desire I have desired to eat this Pasch with you.' O words dictated by the strongest, the most constant, and most generous love! To whom do you address them, divine Jesus? Are they for Thy apostles alone? No, Thy Sacred Heart was then embracing in Its infinite charity

all faithful souls, who were later on also to participate in the divine Eucharist; Thou hadst me particularly in view, and each time that I approach Thy holy table Thou dost speak to me from the depths of Thy holy Tabernacles the words so full of sweetness and love: 'With desire I have desired to eat this Pasch with you.' Lord, who could have believed it, if Thou hadst not said it, that, not content with giving Thyself to us poor weak creatures, Thou dost extend Thy goodness even to testifying an earnest desire to enter our heart? O my God, never permit that I should be so ungrateful as to forget so much love, or neglect so great a grace.

2nd Point.—We ought to desire earnestly to receive Jesus in the divine Eucharist.

'With desire I have desired to eat this Pasch with you.' It is my Saviour Who addresses these words to me; they ought to arouse all the feelings of my heart and inspire me with a desire corresponding to that which Jesus deigns to testify for me. I ought to say to Him: Lord, my heart languishes and is consumed with the desire to participate in Thy ineffable banquet. How comes it that I have so little ardour to prepare myself worthily for this infinite favour, and to keep myself in a state to receive Thee frequently? Is not the Eucharistic Bread preferable to all the enjoyments of life? Is not the Sacred Heart of Jesus the source of all true goods, and is it not in this mystery of His infinite charity that He loves to communicate to us His most precious treasures? Is not my heart made for Thee, O God of love, and art Thou not its only joy and repose, as Thou art its light and strength? To what then can I attribute my coldness and insensibility? I know. It is that in order to taste how sweet Thou art, we must purify our heart from all affections contrary to Thy holy love; we must mortify all earthly inclinations, and sacrifice every obstacle to the operations of Thy grace. Give me then strength to combat my enemies, to overcome myself,

and to prepare in the midst of my soul, by the practice of every virtue, a dwelling agreeable to Thee; then my heart shall hear Thy voice, and dilate itself to receive Thee; Thou wilt overwhelm me with Thy gifts, and fill me with Thyself, and in the transports of my gratitude I shall exclaim: 'My Beloved is all mine, and I am all His' (Cant. ii. 16).

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us return Him humble and lively acts of thanksgiving for the infinite love He manifests towards us in desiring to unite Himself to us in Holy Communion. Let us try to conceive a lively sorrow at the sight of the ingratitude with which we have repaid so much love. Let us pray earnestly to Jesus to change our heart and inspire us with an ardent desire of Holy Communion. Let us implore Him also to give us the strength necessary to triumph over all that opposes the reign of His holy love within us.

Resolution.—To combat generously the bad inclination which, amongst others, has the greatest influence over us.

Offering of the Resolution, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—'With desire I have desired to eat this Pasch with you' (Luke xxii. 15). 'As the thirsty stag pants after the fountains of water, so does my soul thirst after Thee, O God' (Ps. xli. 1).

Prayer.—Soul of Christ, etc., page 4.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CLXXXV.

THE LOVE OF JESUS FOR MEN.

'Jesus, knowing His hour was come, that He should pass out of this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them unto the end.'—JOHN xiii. 1.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—As before, page 205.

2nd Prelude.—Discover to me, O my divine Saviour, the immensity of Thy love for me, and grant me grace to correspond with it.

1st Point.—The love of Jesus for men induces Him to make them an infinite gift.

'Jesus, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them unto the end' (John xiii. 1). These words signify not only that Jesus loved His own unto the end of His life, but that His love has been as great as it could be. Now what is the measure that can regulate the love of a God? No other than infinity. God is love; His love manifests itself in all His works; but it is above all in those which are peculiar to love that He delights in displaying the riches of His power: and among all the gifts which His goodness has deigned to bestow on mankind, that which He is about to grant them is the greatest, the sweetest, the most precious, the most capable of securing their eternal happiness, of inflaming their love and exciting their gratitude. Jesus is about to give Himself to us in the divine Eucharist; earth will have nothing to envy heaven for; our God and Saviour will never be taken away from us; even to the end of time, Jesus, the God of all virtues, will remain in the midst of us, will enter our heart to communicate to us holiness and strength, and to cause us to enjoy a delicious peace. Jesus is about to leave us to go and meet death; our salvation demands the sacrifice of His life; but His Sacred Heart will not leave us orphans; His profound wisdom will invent a means of perpetuating His presence in the midst of the children of men. He will dwell with them, but in what manner? Without show or majesty. He knows to what outrages the obscurity by which He will be surrounded will expose Him, but it is a mystery of love He means to institute. If in it He manifested His glory, weak and timid souls would not dare to approach Him, and the Sacred Heart of Jesus desires to communicate Himself to all. O infinite Goodness! O Love without measure!

. . . How can I refuse to consecrate all my love to Thee?

2nd Point.—The love of Jesus for mankind cannot be diminished by their ingratitude.

'Jesus, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them unto the end' (John xiii. 1). To understand better to what degree Jesus has loved us, let us consider how unworthy we were of the precious gift He made to us. Let us transport ourselves to that moment when, just about to sacrifice His life for us, our Saviour instituted the Sacrament of His love. Whole nations knew Him not; His own people were about to put Him to death; one of His disciples betrayed Him; He foresaw the approaching desertion of all the others; He saw in the future all the sacrileges, the outrages, the crimes which would be committed against His Sacred Person concealed under the eucharistic veils; He foresaw the isolation and solitude in which He would be left in a countless number of His temples; the coldness, the contempt of a multitude of those who neither wished to love Him nor even to know Him. Oh, how strong a love is that which so much ingratitude is incapable of weakening! It could only be found in the Heart of a God. Sacred Heart of Jesus, who is there capable of measuring the height and depth and extent of Thy immense love? It is an abyss in which all thought loses itself. . . . O God of Love! may this abyss draw forth another abyss; may the abyss of Thy mercies draw forth that of my miseries! . . . I am devoid of virtue or of merit; but if Thou wilt draw me to Thyself, to enclose me within Thy Sacred Heart, I shall possess all graces. Sacred Heart of Jesus, Thy merits are my riches, Thy love is my hope. Yes! I possess everything, since Thou dost give Thyself to me. Be, then, my only life, and consume by the flames of Thy love all that is impure and imperfect within me. Infinite Sanctity, make me worthy of Thee, and take entire possession of me.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us offer to His divine Heart

all the homage of adoration, love, and gratitude of which we are capable. Let us make Him reparation for the outrages of sinners and our own ingratitude. Let us give Him our heart, begging Him to replenish it with His love, and to place within it the dispositions possessed by the great apostle when he defied all creatures to separate him from the love of Jesus Christ.

Resolution.—To sacrifice generously to Jesus all that hinders the reign of His love in our soul.

Offering of the Resolution, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—'Jesus having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them unto the end' (John xiii. 1). O Jesus! may the abyss of Thy goodness attract the abyss of my miseries!

Prayer.—Soul of Christ, etc., page 4.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CLXXXVI.

THE WASHING OF THE FEET.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—'And when supper was done . . . having taken a towel, He girded Himself. After that, He putteth water into a basin, and began to wash the feet of His disciples, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith He was girded' (John xiii. 4, 5).

2*nd Prelude.*—Represent to yourself anew the supper-room.

3*rd Prelude.*—O Jesus, meek and humble of heart, make my heart like unto Thine.

1*st Point.*—Consider the persons.

Our divine Saviour. His adorable Person seems to exhibit a something still more august and recollected than ordinary. . . . The apostles. They are all attention: a

holy respect is visible on their countenances. . . . Let us observe attentively what is about to take place.

2nd Point.—Consider the actions.

Jesus, the Sovereign Lord of heaven and earth, prostrate and washing the feet of His apostles. Let us go into the details of this action, so fitted to confound our pride; let us behold our Lord pouring the water over the feet of the first apostle . . . then wiping them . . . continuing the same thing to them all, without excepting the traitor, Judas. . . . Jesus at the feet of Judas! What a lesson for us! . . . And I still shrink from humbling myself, and submitting to others! . . . Let us remark the resistance of St. Peter. . . . The obedience alone which he owes to his divine Master can induce him to accept this service from Him; he feels acutely the greatness of Jesus and his own unworthiness. . . . Is it with such sentiments that I receive favours from our Lord? . . .

3rd Point.—Listen to the words.

Peter cries out in a tone of religious fear: 'Lord, dost Thou wash my feet?' . . . Jesus answered and said to him: 'What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter.' . . . Peter still resists: 'No,' he says, 'Thou shalt never wash my feet' (John xiii. 6—8). What sentiments at that moment fill his soul! . . . Jesus rebukes him with authority, saying: 'If I wash thee not thou shalt have no part with Me.' . . . Peter is terrified at this menace; he submits, and says with eagerness: 'Lord, not only my feet, but also my hands and my head.' . . . 'He that is washed,' Jesus replies, 'needeth not but to wash his feet. . . . You are clean, but not all.' . . . The last words are addressed to Judas, who hardens his heart that he may not be moved by them. . . . At length Jesus returns to His place, saying: 'Know you what I have done to you? . . . I have given you an example, that as I have done to you, so you do also. The servant is not greater than his lord. . . . If you know these things you shall be blessed if you do them' (John

xiii. 8—17). O my Jesus, Thou alone couldst teach us to seek repose of heart in the practice of humility!

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us adore Him as the Master and Model of true humility. Let us beg of Him a right understanding of His divine example. Let us humble ourselves for the little conformity which is to be found between His Sacred Heart and ours. Let us ask Him to replenish us with His Spirit, and make us imitate all His virtues.

Resolutions.—To bear humiliations and contempt with meekness. Not to be afraid of humbling ourselves in order to serve others.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—Jesus has given us an example that we should do as He has done. 'The servant is not greater than his Lord' (John xiii. 16).

Prayer.—Soul of Christ, etc., page 4.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

CONTEMPLATION CLXXXVII.

INSTITUTION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—'And whilst they were at supper, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and broke: and gave to His disciples, and said: Take ye, and eat; This is My Body. And taking the chalice He gave thanks: and gave to them, saying: Drink ye all of this. For this is My Blood of the New Testament which shall be shed for many unto remission of sins' (Matt. xxvi. 26—28).

2*nd Prelude.*—Again represent to yourself the supper-room.

3*rd Prelude.*—Adorable Jesus, I beg of Thee to inspire me with lively gratitude at the sight of the infinite gift Thou hast deigned to leave us.

1*st Point.*—Consider the persons.

Let us not grow weary of contemplating our divine Saviour at this moment, when He is about to give us the strongest and most touching proof of His love. . . . His recollection is profound, the immense love which consumes His Sacred Heart is visible on His august countenance. . . . The religious respect of the disciples increases each instant; a secret fire is communicated to their souls. . . . All in their exterior bears the impress of the feelings they experience. Such ought to be my dispositions whenever I have the happiness to approach the holy table; all in me should breathe forth recollection, modesty, respect, and love. O my Jesus, how far am I from bringing to this divine banquet the necessary preparation! Have pity on me, O my Saviour, and deign to supply Thyself for all that I am incapable of doing in these precious moments.

2*nd Point.*—Listen to the words, and consider the actions.

Before instituting this great mystery, Jesus converses interiorly with His heavenly Father; He prays to Him for all those who should one day participate in this sacred banquet. I was present at that moment to His adorable Heart, as much so as if I alone had been in the world. How much He then loved me, and how much He loves me still! . . . What could He have done for me that He has not done? . . . Behold Him taking up the bread. 'Take ye and eat,' He says to His apostles, 'this is My Body' (Matt. xxvi. 26). Oh all-powerful words! It is no longer a morsel of bread which Jesus holds in His hands; it is His own adorable Body. Himself entirely both as God and man. He gives Himself to the apostles to be the food of their souls. . . . Let us consider the respect of the apostles, their piety and their love in receiving for the first time this divine food. Jesus afterwards takes the chalice, and giving thanks, He gives it to them, saying, 'Drink ye all of this. For this is My Blood of the New Testament

which shall be shed for many unto remission of sins' (Matt. xxvi. 27, 28). Oh Blood of my Jesus, source of all purity, if Thou dost not flow within my soul, my soul is nothing more than an object of horror in the eyes of God my Father; if Thou dost not flow within my heart, my heart is like dry and barren land, incapable of producing anything; wash me then from all my stains, and cause me to bring forth all sorts of virtues.

Colloquy with the Divine Heart of Jesus.—Let us offer Him our homage of adoration and love. Let us thank Him for the institution of the divine Eucharist, and ask of Him the grace always to approach that adorable Sacrament with holy dispositions, and draw from it all the fruit which it produces in souls well prepared.

Resolutions.—Often to go in spirit to the foot of the tabernacle to thank Jesus Christ for the inestimable gift of the blessed Eucharist, and if in our power to make frequent visits with this intention.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—'What shall I render to the Lord for all the things that He hath rendered to me?' (Ps. cxv. 3).

Prayer.—Soul of Christ, etc., page 4.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

APPLICATION OF THE SENSES CLXXXVIII.

WASHING OF THE FEET AND INSTITUTION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—'And when supper was done . . . He riseth from supper, and layeth aside His garments, and having taken a towel, girded Himself. After that, He putteth water into a basin, and began to wash the feet of His disciples' (John xiii. 4, 5). 'And whilst they were at supper, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and broke and gave to His disciples:

and said: Take ye and eat: This is My Body. And taking the chalice He gave thanks: and gave to them, saying: Drink ye all of this. For this is My Blood' (Matt. xxvi. 26—28).

2nd Prelude.—Again shut yourself up in spirit in the supper-room.

3rd Prelude.—I beg of Thee, O divine Jesus, to penetrate my heart with gratitude for Thy benefits.

1st Point.—Sight.

Let us consider Jesus at the feet of His apostles, of Peter, of Judas. Let us behold Him returning to table. Let us watch carefully the institution of the Blessed Sacrament, without letting any circumstance escape us. Let us observe the recollection of the apostles; the love shown by Jesus; the angels penetrated with admiration at the sight of this great mystery.

2nd Point.—Hearing.

Let us listen to all the words which are spoken when Jesus washes the feet of His apostles; during the resistance of St. Peter; the lesson given him by Jesus; the words addressed by our divine Lord to His disciples after the ceremony. 'I have given you an example, that as I have done to you, so you do also' (John xiii. 15). 'The servant is not greater than his lord' (John xiii. 16). Let us listen to His words when instituting the blessed Eucharist, and above all to the sacramental words: 'This is My Body. This is My Blood' (Matt. xxvi. 26, 28).

3rd Point.—Smell.

Let us inhale the sweet odour of the apostles' recollection—the odour of life which Jesus diffuses around Him, and the celestial perfume of the divine Eucharist which is about to communicate to mankind all His virtues and all His merits.

4th Point.—Taste.

What wonders are here to be tasted; the infinite sweetness of the Sacred Heart of Jesus—His humility, His love, the holy joy of the apostles, their profound venera-

tion, their lively gratitude. Let us taste above all the sentiments which penetrate the heart of Peter and that of the beloved disciple.

5th Point.—Touch.

Let us offer ourselves to Jesus to pour the water over the feet of the apostles. Let us kiss respectfully those feet which our divine Lord has not disdained to wash with His own hands. Let us place ourselves at table with the apostles. Let us imagine that Jesus presents the Eucharistic Bread to us as He did to them, and let us make a spiritual communion as fervently as possible.

Colloquy, Resolutions, Offering, Spiritual Bouquet, Prayer, and *Examen,* as in the preceding Contemplation.

MEDITATION CLXXXIX.

INSTITUTION OF THE BLESSED EUCHARIST.

'And, taking bread, He gave thanks, and brake: and gave to them, saying: This is My Body, which is given for you. Do this for a commemoration of Me. In like manner the chalice also, after He had supped, saying: This is the chalice of the New Testament in My Blood, which shall be shed for you.'—LUKE xxii. 19, 20.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude.—Imagine to yourself the supper-room.

2nd Prelude.—Divine Jesus, grant me the gift of firm hope in Thy infinite merits.

1st Point.—Jesus Christ by His death has merited all graces for us.

'This is My Body, which is given for you' (Luke xxii. 19). It is for me that Jesus has sacrificed His life, and shed all His Blood. Faith teaches me that in saving all mankind by His death, He proposed to Himself the happiness of each one in particular, so that each one may say: It is for me that Jesus has suffered and died. I cannot

doubt it. The merits of my Saviour are a treasure that belong to me. I can, if I will, draw from thence all the graces necessary to purify me from my sins, to correct my faults, to acquire all virtues, and to merit eternal happiness. I am, then, under a delusion when, through pretext of a pretended impossibility, I neglect to work at my sanctification. I have not formed a just idea of the merits of my Saviour when I give myself up to trouble, discouragement, and fear at the sight of my faults. Oh my divine Jesus, cause me to see the truth, make me know and appreciate the graces Thou hast merited for me by Thy death. These graces are all powerful; they infinitely surpass all my corruption and misery; but I do not comprehend this truth which ought to fill me with joy, and lift me above every hindrance. Give me, then, the clear vision of this truth; open unto me Thy Sacred Heart; show me all the love Thou hast for me; all the helps Thou dost offer me; and grant me grace to have always within my heart and on my lips these words of Thy great apostle: 'I can do all things in Him Who strengthens me' (Phil. iv. 13).

2nd Point.—Jesus Christ in Holy Communion applies to us all the graces He has merited for us by His death.

'This is My body which is given for you' (Luke xxii. 19). Jesus applies to us the fruits of His redemption by all the Sacraments; but it is, above all, in the Holy Communion that we participate abundantly in His merits. The blood of the old Adam in running through our veins has transmitted his corruption unto us; for this reason we are all conceived in sin, and subject to a thousand vicious inclinations. But Jesus Christ in the Holy Communion becomes incarnate in our heart. By this mystery of love our flesh is united to His adorable Flesh, and His precious Blood mingles with ours to cure our corruption, and imbue us with sanctity. It is in participating worthily in this ineffable Sacrament that we can draw from the sacred fountains of our Saviour, and enrich ourselves with His gifts. The Eucharistic Bread is called the Bread of the

Strong, because it gives to all those who nourish themselves upon it strength to conquer their bad inclinations, and to triumph over all their enemies. I give Thee thanks, O my divine Jesus, for having attached to so sweet a means the powerful helps which are so necessary for me. Grant me grace to neglect nothing in order to profit completely by them.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us adore Him as our Ransom and the Author of our salvation. Let us thank Him for the institution of the blessed Eucharist, in which He comes Himself into the midst of our hearts to apply unto us His merits. Let us ask of Him the grace to derive from it all the graces which are necessary for our sanctification.

Resolution.—To practise the virtue we need the most, with a view of profiting by our Communions.

Offering of the Resolution, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—'I can do all things in Him Who strengtheneth me' (Phil. iv. 13).

Prayer.—Soul of Christ, etc., page 4.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

CONTEMPLATION CXC.

JESUS FORETELLS THE TREASON OF JUDAS.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—'When Jesus had said these things, He was troubled in spirit; and He said: Amen, Amen, I say to you, one of you is about to betray Me. The disciples therefore looked one upon another, doubting of whom He spoke. And being very much troubled, they began every one to say: Is it I, Lord?' (John xiii. 21, 22; Matt. xxvi. 22).

2*nd Prelude.*—Represent to yourself the supper-room.

3*rd Prelude.*—Divine Jesus, I implore of Thee to

inspire me with a lively horror of sin, and an ardent love for Thee.

1*st Point.*—Consider the persons.

Our divine Saviour . . . The apostles. . . . All hearts are filled with emotion. . . . The privileged disciple is leaning on the bosom of his Master. . . . Judas keeps a sullen silence . . . he looks dark and preoccupied. . . . Oh! how unhappy we are when we betray Jesus to satisfy our passions, and obstinately resist the remorse of our conscience!

2*nd and* 3*rd Points.*—Listen to the words and consider the actions.

Jesus is troubled in spirit; His holy soul is penetrated with horror at the sight of the sacrilegious communion of Judas, and of the crime he is about to commit: 'Amen, amen, I say to you,' He says, 'one of you is about to betray Me.' . . . All the apostles are troubled at His words, and looking at each other, they ask: 'Is it I?' Jesus answers: 'He that dippeth his hand with Me in the dish, he shall betray Me. The Son of Man indeed goeth as it is written of Him.' He goes to consummate the work of redeeming mankind by His death. 'But wo to that man by whom the Son of Man shall be betrayed: it were better for him if he had never been born' (Matt. xxvi. 21—24). . . . Judas, fearing that his silence would cause him to be suspected, then asks also: 'Is it I, Lord?' Jesus says to him in a low voice, so as not to be heard by the other apostles: 'Thou hast said it' (Matt. xxvi. 25). . . . The disciples, still troubled, question each other with bated breath. . . . The beloved disciple is leaning on the bosom of his Master. Simon Peter makes a sign to him to ask our Lord; and he, still reposing on the bosom of Jesus, says to Him: 'Lord, who is it?' Jesus answers: 'He it is to whom I shall reach bread dipped' (John xiii. 25, 26); and dipping the bread, He gives it to Judas, accompanying this mark of kindness with the grace of remorse which urged him not to commit the crime. But, seeing that

nothing could convert him, He says to him with majesty: 'That which thou dost, do quickly' (John xiii. 27). Judas rises up and goes out immediately to consummate his crime. Jesus then recites the hymn of thanksgiving with the eleven disciples, and, going out, they direct their steps to Mount Olivet.

Colloquy with the Sacred Heart of Jesus.—Let as adore Him with all the love and respect of which we shall be capable. Let us grieve with Him over the treachery of Judas. Let us beg of Him never to permit us to be so unhappy as to harden our hearts to His voice, or resist His grace.

Resolution.—To accomplish faithfully all that Jesus shall ask of us, through the inspirations of His grace.

Offering of the Resolution, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—O Jesus, give me a docile heart that may never resist Thee.

Prayer.—Soul of Christ, etc., page 4.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CXCI.

THE NEW COMMANDMENT.

'A new commandment I give unto you: That you love one another, as I have loved you.'—JOHN xiii. 34.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—Represent to yourself the supper-room.

2*nd Prelude.*—Adorable Heart of Jesus, grant me grace to fulfil to its utmost extent the great precept of charity.

1*st Point.*—Nature of the charity which Jesus has had for us.

Jesus, seeing Himself on the point of leaving His dear disciples, speaks to them with the greatest affection:

'Little children,' He says to them, 'yet a little while I am with you. You shall seek Me, and as I said to the Jews: Whither I go, you cannot come; so I say to you now' (John xiii. 33). After this touching preface, He makes known to them His last wishes. 'I give unto you,' He says, 'a new commandment: That you love one another, as I have loved you' (John xiii. 34). O divine Heart of my Jesus, cause me to understand the nature of the love Thou commandest me to imitate! It is pure: Thou hast not loved us with a view to Thy own interest, but in order to make us happy by communicating to us the graces of which Thou art the Source. Thine is a preventing love. Thou didst love us when we were Thy enemies, Thou didst come down from heaven to seek us, Thou hast made every effort to engage us to love Thee. Thine is a generous love; it has cost Thee fatigues and labours and painful journeys; now it is about to cost Thee torments and death. Thine is a constant love; our numberless ingratitudes cannot diminish it. It is a tender love; at the moment Thou art about to die for us, Thou dost conceive the means of remaining still on earth, that Thou mayst never be separated from Thy children. In fine, Thine is a beneficent love; Thou art about to shut up hell and open heaven for us, Thou wilt repair our losses and merit for us every grace. O loving Heart of my Jesus, replenish me with Thy Spirit; grant me grace to copy Thy divine charity to the full extent of my power.

2nd Point.—The nature of the charity which we should have for our neighbour.

'A new commandment I give unto you: That you love one another, as I have loved you' (John xiii. 34). It is to the school of His Sacred Heart that my Saviour calls me. What ought I to do in order to trace within my soul the characters of His divine charity? I ought to have a pure love for my neighbour, sanctifying my lawful affections by religion, and loving all mankind in Jesus and for Jesus. My love for others ought to be preventing: a pure, dis-

interested, universal charity; a generous love which will, if necessary, cause me to sacrifice for the happiness of others my tastes and inclinations, as well as the interests of my self-love; a constant love, which is not discouraged by any coldness or ingratitude, which time does not diminish; a tender love, which will make me compassionate the trials of others and try to relieve them; in fine, a beneficent love, which will use the means to procure the happiness of others, and, above all, their salvation. Divine Jesus, how far am I from possessing such perfect charity! Nevertheless, Thou dost say that it must be found in Thy true disciples, and serve to distinguish them from those who have not the happiness of belonging to Thee. Thy glory demands, then, O Lord, that I labour to acquire this lovely virtue. Besides, this is the only means I have of testifying my love to Thee. Ah! with all my heart I wish to imitate Thy divine Heart by practising charity as perfectly as I possibly can.

Colloquy with the Divine Heart of Jesus.—Let us adore Jesus with profound respect, and receive with gratitude the precept of charity which He vouchsafes to give us. Let us pour forth our soul in His presence, grieving over all within it which is opposed to perfect charity, renouncing all this, and praying our Lord to free us from uncharitableness, and to substitute within us sentiments worthy of Him.

Resolutions.—To be kind and gentle towards others, and to render them all the services in our power.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—'This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you' (John xv. 12).

Prayer.—Soul of Christ, etc., page 4.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CXCII.

JESUS FORETELLS THE DENIAL OF ST. PETER.

'Then Jesus said to them: All you shall be scandalized in Me this night . . . But after I shall be risen again, I will go before you into Galilee. And Peter, answering, said to him: Although all shall be scandalized in Thee, I will never be scandalized. Jesus said to Him: Amen I say to thee, that in this night, before the cock crow, thou wilt deny me thrice. Peter saith to Him: Yea, though I should die with Thee, I will not deny Thee. And in like manner said all the disciples.'—MATT. xxvi. 31-35.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude*, as before, page 220.

2*nd Prelude.*—Fill me, O Lord, with a humble mistrust of myself, that so I may be preserved from the misfortune of offending Thee.

1*st Point.*—The goodness of Jesus in the warnings He gives to the apostles.

Let us consider with what kindness our divine Saviour prepares His apostles for the trials they will soon have to undergo. He has just fortified them with the divine Eucharist, He has spoken to them with the greatest affection; now He tells them what is about to happen to Him, in order to prepare them for it, and He softens these afflicting predictions by adding to them that of His approaching resurrection. If we pay attention to the dealings of our Lord with us, we shall discover that the trials by which He sometimes visits us are always preceded by some special grace, whose end is to dispose us to reap from it the fruits of salvation attached to sufferings. Adorable Heart of Jesus, Thou dost never deceive us; Thou dost give us on all occasions testimonies of Thy love; Thou dost proportion Thy trials to our strength; Thou dost encourage us by Thy promises, and Thou dost give us Thy aid if we are faithful in having recourse to Thee with humility. Grant me grace, O my God, to put all graces to profit, that so I may attach myself more and more to Thee.

2nd Point.—The presumption of St. Peter in his promises of fidelity.

'Peter, answering, said to Jesus: Although all shall be scandalized in Thee, I will never be scandalized' (Matt. xxvi. 33). These protestations were sincere, but Peter reckoned too much on his own strength, and his presumption was the cause of his fall. Let us gather instruction from so great an example, and let us well understand that a sincere diffidence in ourselves, accompanied by humble and fervent prayer, can alone enable us to escape the dangers which surround us. 'When I am weak,' said the great apostle, 'then I am strong.' 'Gladly will I glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may dwell in me' (2 Cor. xii. 9). I ought to be in similar dispositions if I wish to triumph over all obstacles, and to remain constantly faithful to our Lord. Penetrate me, O my God, with sentiments of my own misery, and with the fear of offending Thee; inspire me at the same time with great confidence in Thy all-powerful help, and I shall be secure against all perils.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us thank Him for the goodness with which he has deigned so many times to warn us against the dangers which threaten our soul. Let us humble ourselves for our falls, owning that they have always been the result of sentiments of pride or presumption. Let us ask of Him the grace to detach ourselves sincerely from ourselves, and to trust earnestly in Him, that so we may be always preserved from sin.

Resolutions.—To watch over ourselves, that we may avoid the smallest faults, and to have recourse to God by frequent elevations of our heart to Him.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—'Gladly will I glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may dwell in me' (2 Cor. xii. 9).

Prayer.—Soul of Christ, etc., page 4.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CXCIII.

JESUS PREPARES HIS APOSTLES FOR THE TRIALS THEY WILL SOON HAVE TO UNDERGO.

'Let not your heart be troubled. You believe in God, believe also in Me.'—JOHN xiv. 1.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude*, page 220.

2*nd Prelude.*—Divine Jesus, vouchsafe to diffuse Thy peace within my soul, and grant me grace never to lose it.

1*st Point.*—Jesus bids His disciples not to give way to trouble.

'Let not your heart be troubled. You believe in God, believe also in Me' (John xiv. 1). Jesus is the God of peace. He wishes His disciples to enjoy a holy repose, even in the midst of the greatest tribulations. He says to them: 'Let not your heart be troubled,' as if He would say: All that you shall witness this night ought not to alarm you, or make you lose courage; 'You believe in God, believe also in Me.' Believe in the promise which I have made you of rising again in three days, and of accomplishing all that the prophets have predicted regarding the establishment of My reign. 'Let not your heart be troubled,' believe, and love, and keep in view My divinity, My power, the protection with which My divine Heart delights to cover you, and remain immovable in your peace and confidence. O my adorable Saviour, Thou dost address me in similar language. Thou desirest that my soul be replenished with Thy love, and established in Thy peace. It is Thy wish that in the midst of the most painful trials I be mindful of the love Thou hast for me, and that I hope for all things from Thy infinite goodness. O divine Jesus! how just it is that I should hope in this goodness! It has never been wanting to anyone; it is the support of all who are weak, and the refuge of all the

miserable. Yes! I cast myself into Thy arms with peace and confidence. Mayest Thou be for ever the object of my unshaken fidelity.

2nd Point.—The causes from which our troubles arise.

'Let not your heart be troubled.' Anxiety is opposed to the spirit of Jesus; we must then endeavour to keep ourselves from it. It may arise from various causes; sometimes temptations are the cause of worry, and then we must possess our souls in patience, have recourse to God, and resist courageously. At other times trouble arises from the faults or imperfections into which we may have fallen. We ought in this case to raise ourselves up by sincere repentance, and a firm purpose not to relapse in future. But we give way to anxiety most frequently through not understanding sufficiently how dangerous this disposition is to us, or what obstacles it raises to the communications which the Sacred Heart of Jesus desires to have with our soul. Let us pray to our adorable Saviour to make us hear His divine voice speaking within us, and let us ask Him to appease the storms so often excited in our soul through the passions we have not sufficiently mastered; let us beg of Him to establish us in profound peace by raising us above every other fear than that of offending Him.

Colloquy with our Divine Lord.—Let us offer Him our acts of adoration and love. Let us ask Him for grace not to give way to trouble under our temptations and trials. Let us consecrate ourselves entirely to Him, that so He may possess us and establish us in His peace, illuminate us with His light, and teach us to practise all virtues.

Resolutions.—Not to give way to trouble for any cause, but to have recourse with confidence to the divine Heart of Jesus under our trials and difficulties.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—Jesus, God of peace, have mercy on us.

Prayer.—Soul of Christ, etc., page 4.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CXCIV.

JESUS IS THE WAY.

'And whither I go, you know; and the way, you know. Thomas saith to Him: Lord, we know not whither Thou goest, and how can we know the way? Jesus saith to Him: I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life. No man cometh to the Father but by Me.'—JOHN xiv. 4, seq.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—Place yourself in the supper-room with the apostles, and listen to the words of Jesus.

2*nd Prelude.*—Grant me grace, O my divine Jesus, to attach myself to Thee with all my heart, since Thou art the Way which alone can lead to true happiness.

1*st Point.*—Jesus is our Way.

'I am the Way. No man cometh to the Father but by Me' (John xiv. 6). Jesus has marked out for us by His example and His instructions the way we are to follow. He Himself is our Way. A glorious way in which we cannot walk without combat, and without practising the most sublime virtues—a precious way in which we are enriched with merits, the end of which is eternal salvation—a way infinitely sweet, in which we walk through love, since it unites us to Jesus, and introduces us into His adorable Heart, thereby giving us access to His heavenly Father. Exiles on the earth, far removed from our true country, can any care be dearer to us than that of seeking out this divine way, and following in it faithfully after having found it? Every other way leads to eternal death; we must go to Jesus if we wish to have life. Oh! if the paths He has marked out for us seem narrow, let us remember that He has cleared them for us by His sufferings, and will support us in them by His grace. O Jesus, can I allow myself to be discouraged by difficulties when Thou Thyself dost call me, and Thyself desirest to lead me to Thy Father?

2*nd Point.*—We ought to follow Jesus, our Way.

'I am the Way. No man cometh to the Father but by Me' (John xiv. 6). Jesus is our Way; we must follow Him by obliging ourselves to make each day new progress in His knowledge, in His love, and in His imitation; we must follow Him with fidelity, not turning away either to the right or to the left, for fear we may lose our way; with courage, surmounting generously all obstacles and despising the temptations which might induce us to turn back; with joy, having ever before our eyes the promises of our Lord, and reckoning with confidence on His divine assistance; with perseverance, knowing that the crown is promised to those only who shall reach the goal. The greater number wear themselves out in passing and repassing roads which lead to death; some pursue honours, others riches, others pleasures; they give themselves incredible pains to reach the end they propose to themselves, uncertain as it is. Ought we to walk with less earnestness in the road which leads to life? Never permit this, O my Jesus! draw me after Thee, and fix my steps for ever in Thy paths.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us render Him our homage of adoration and love, thanking Him for deigning to make Himself our Way—a sure Way, and one which will be sweet to us if we be but faithful to it. Let us humble ourselves at His feet for having had so little constancy in following in His steps. Let us beg of Him to fill us with strength and courage, that we may walk in it in future with persevering generosity.

Resolution.—To resist that one of our inclinations which makes us commit the most faults.

Offering of the Resolution, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—O Jesus, Who art my Way, 'draw me, and I will run after the odour of Thy perfumes.'

Prayer.—Soul of Christ, etc., page 4.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CXCV.

JESUS IS THE TRUTH.

'I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life. No man cometh to the Father but by Me.'—JOHN xiv. 6.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—The same, page 227.

2*nd Prelude.*—Divine Jesus, Who art Truth, teach me the truth, and place me in the way of truth.

1*st Point.*—Jesus is the Truth.

'I am the Truth' (John xiv. 6). Only a God could have spoken thus. The sacred writers, the prophets, and the saints have spoken and acted according to truth, but it belongs to Jesus alone to be Himself that truth. He does not possess this truth from another; it is His own essentially, and He it is Who communicates it to all that are true, holy and just. If we draw near to Him we shall be illuminated with a pure light. Let us, then, go to this adorable Lord, and say to Him with the author of the 'Imitation': 'In Thee alone, O Lord, is to be found all that I desire; let all the doctors refrain from speaking, let all creatures keep silence before Thee; speak Thou alone to me.' Everything in Jesus Christ instructs us; His actions, His words, and His mysteries are a school of wisdom in which we ought continually to form our minds and hearts. But in order to relish these divine lessons, we must purify our souls from all depraved affections; for, as St. Augustine says, in the same way as bread is thought pleasant only to those in health, so the truth of Jesus Christ is sweet to faithful souls alone, who are exempt from the spirit of the world and from the infection of sin. Divine Jesus! Thou hast the words of eternal life, and Thou alone dost bestow intelligence of things pertaining to salvation; open the ears of my heart and deign to speak to it;

cause it to know Thee, and to relish Thy truth, that it may be nourished with it, and unite itself inseparably to Thee.

2nd Point.—In order to relish the truth of Jesus, we must renounce the spirit of the world, which is no better than a spirit of lies and deception.

Jesus is the Truth. If we wish to be preserved from error, we must attach ourselves to Him; but we shall never achieve this unless we begin to divest ourselves of the spirit of the world, which is a spirit of error and lies. It is only by despising its vanities, detesting its maxims, and estranging ourselves from it, that we shall be in a state to relish the truth of Jesus and become united to Him. This is marked out to us by the words of the prophet: 'Children of men, how long will you be dull of heart? Why do you love vanity and seek after lies?' (Ps. iv. 3). Vanity and lies weigh down the heart, and hinder it from raising itself up to the sovereign truth. With what earnestness ought I not to labour to banish from my heart all that could turn it away from the truth of Jesus! O my Saviour and my sovereign Good! Thou alone dost deserve my love. Ought I not to esteem myself too happy to be able to attach myself to Thee alone? O God Who art the Truth, render me one with Thee in Thy eternal charity!

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us adore Him as the Eternal Truth, Who can neither deceive nor be deceived. Let us thank Him for having deigned to manifest Himself unto us, for having vouchsafed to instruct us by His words, His example, and the interior voice of His Spirit. Let us ask His pardon for the opposition His divine truth has so often found within us. Let us beg of Him to rectify our mind, to purify our heart, and to make us love His eternal truth.

Resolution.—To practise recollection in order to become united to Jesus Christ, and to relish His truth.

Offering of the Resolution, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—O God, Who art the Truth, make me one with Thee in Thy eternal charity.

Prayer.—Soul of Christ, etc., page 4.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CXCVI.

JESUS IS THE LIFE.

'I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life.'—JOHN xiv. 6.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—Page 227.

2*nd Prelude.*—Divine Jesus, grant me grace to live but for Thee alone.

1*st Point.*—Jesus is the Life.

'I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life' (John xiv. 6). To live separated from Jesus is to be dead, but to rejoice in a sweet union with Him is to possess life. This precious life has different degrees. It is called the life of grace when it banishes mortal sin from our soul, rendering it pleasing in the sight of God, and giving it a right to its heavenly inheritance. When it is fortified by the holy exercise of prayer and the practice of virtue, it is termed interior life; it then establishes us in a sweet communication with God; we know Him better, we love Him more, and we serve Him with greater pleasure. When Jesus deigns to come into our hearts by Holy Communion, this precious life assumes a divine character; it is then called sacramental life, and unites us to our adorable Saviour in a manner so intimate, that no union can be imagined more close or more loving; our heart is His tabernacle, our soul His spouse, and when we offer no resistance to His love, He overwhelms us with His graces and prepares us for the life of glory which we shall enjoy in heaven without fear of ever losing it. This fourth sort of life is the term and consummation of all the others; it is not given

to our weak intelligence to know the delights which are prepared for faithful souls; all that we know is, that the eye hath not seen, nor the ear heard, neither hath the mind of man ever been able to comprehend anything to be compared unto it. O Jesus, my only life! who can be compared with Thee! Ah! Lord, let heaven and earth, with all the beauty with which Thou hast adorned them, keep silence, and conceal themselves before Thee, for they possess nothing beautiful or admirable but what Thou hast pleased to bestow on them, and their beauty will never equal Thine, Thou Whose very name is unutterable and Whose wisdom is infinite. Let me live but for Thee, O my Saviour, and grant that my death, in breaking my ties to this world, may consummate the sweet union which will constitute my happiness throughout eternity.

2nd Point.—We can possess life only by uniting ourselves to Jesus.

The closer we are united to our adorable Saviour, the more we shall rejoice in the precious advantages which this life procures for those who possess it. What charms can still be capable of seducing us, or turn us away from our sovereign Good? The pleasures of life, human gratifications, the esteem and approbation of the world—in a word, all the ephemeral advantages which we pursue when we do not seek Jesus alone, can they bear any comparison with this divine life? Our divine Shepherd has shed all His Blood that His sheep may have life, and even possess it abundantly. Can we wish to profit only imperfectly by His merits, to possess only a feeble life, when He offers us in His love its very fulness? Let us ponder sadly this truth. Jesus Christ is ignored and outraged everywhere; men despise His graces, and obstinately remain in death when He is burning with the desire to give them life; His divine Heart seeks for souls more chivalrous, with whom He can console Himself; He has cast His eyes on us—can we share in the shameful indifference of His

enemies? No, my Jesus, I will not cause this suffering to Thy divine Heart; I desire to seek life in Thee, by dying to myself and to all things that can place any obstacle to Thy love.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us adore Him as our Saviour and the Author of life. Let us thank Him for having deigned to communicate to us by Baptism, and to increase within us by Holy Communion, this precious life, of which He is the source. Let us ask His pardon for the little zeal we have shown to make new and continual progress. Let us beg of Him to help us to overcome our vicious inclinations, and ask Him to cause us to live in Him with all the fulness which His Sacred Heart desires.

Resolutions.—To combat courageously the defect which is the greatest obstacle to our union with Jesus. To practise recollection and the spirit of prayer.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—O my Jesus, live in me, and grant that I may live in Thee.

Prayer.—Soul of Christ, etc., page 4.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CXCVII.

PROMISES OF JESUS TO FAITH AND CONFIDENCE.

'Amen, amen, I say unto you, he that believeth in Me, the works that I do, he also shall do; and greater than these shall he do. Because I go to the Father; and whatsoever you shall ask the Father in My name, that will I do: that the Father may be glorified in the Son.'—JOHN xiv. 12, 13.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—Place yourself in the supper-room near the beloved disciple.

2nd Prelude.—Divine Jesus, grant me the gift of a lively faith and ardent charity.

1st Point.—A lively and practical faith in Jesus Christ renders us able to do all things.

'Amen, amen, I say to you, he that believeth in Me, the works that I do, he also shall do . . . and greater than these shall he do; because I go to the Father' (John xiv. 12, 13). Jesus has merited for His true disciples the graces necessary for following His divine example; if their faith be lively and practical, He assures them on oath that they will be able to do the same works as Himself. This is to be understood of the miracles of His power under circumstances when the first establishing of the Church rendered them necessary, but above all, and in all times, of the imitation of His virtues. It is, then, to those who possess the spirit of faith that Jesus promises perfect conformity with Himself. Oh! how precious this spirit ought to be to me! How eager I should be to make use of it! Divine Jesus, grant me grace to embrace it with all my heart!

2nd Point.—A humble and firm hope in Jesus Christ obtains all things from the Father.

'Whatsoever you shall ask the Father in My name, that I will do: that the Father may be glorified in the Son' (John xiv. 13). The spirit of faith leads to firm confidence, for by unceasingly considering Jesus in all things, and all things in Jesus, we learn to know the goodness of our adorable Saviour, to appreciate His merits whose value is infinite, and not to look for any grace save in virtue of His merits and death. Were our hope thus established in Jesus Christ, it would obtain everything from our heavenly Father, and would procure Him very great glory. Why, then, are not all our prayers animated with it? Clearly, because we are wanting in humility, and because we do not sufficiently know our divine Saviour. Self-love makes us place, though often in an imperceptible manner, the foundation of our confidence on personal merits, and as these merits

are not to be found within us, our hope is without support. We do not know Jesus, and hence it arises that we fear to place our confidence in Him, as if the treasures of grace and mercy which He has opened for us through the mystery of the Cross did not exceed infinitely our miseries and wants. O my adorable Saviour, grant that I may know Thee, and that placing all my confidence in Thy merits, I may obtain from Thy Father all that I shall ask for His glory and my salvation.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us adore Him as our Redeemer, our Saviour, and our Model. Let us thank Him for the promises He has made us, and for the warnings He has given us. Let us beg of Him to remove all presumption from our heart, and to inspire us with unlimited confidence in His infinite merits.

Resolution.—To animate all our prayers with humility and confidence.

Offering of the Resolution, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—Lord, I place all my confidence in Thee ; I shall never be confounded.

Prayer.—Soul of Christ, etc., page 4.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CXCVIII.

JESUS PROMISES TO SEND DOWN THE PARACLETE.

'And I will ask the Father, and He shall give you another Paraclete, that He may abide with you for ever. The Spirit of Truth, Whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, nor knoweth Him : but you shall know Him ; because He shall abide with you, and shall be in you.'—JOHN xiv. 16, 17.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—Same as before, page 233.

2*nd Prelude.*—O my God, give me Thy divine Spirit ; teach me to know Him, and grant that He may dwell within me.

1*st Point.*—The world cannot receive the Holy Spirit.

'And I will ask My Father, and He shall give you another Paraclete . . . the Spirit of Truth, Whom the world cannot receive; because it seeth Him not nor knoweth Him' (John xiv. 16, 17). The world only knows and relishes that which comes under the senses and flatters the inclinations of nature; interior things are beyond it, for it cannot receive the Holy Spirit. The Lord had said at the time of man's first corruption: 'My Spirit can dwell no longer with man, because he is flesh.' It is in the same sense that Jesus here says that the world cannot receive the communications of the Holy Spirit, since, He tells us, it neither knows nor sees Him. What horror ought I not to have for a world plunged in the life of the senses, in which the Spirit of God cannot find an entrance! How contemptible ought not its pomps, its maxims, and its pleasures to appear to me! O my God, preserve me ever from the air of contagion in this region of death; replenish me with Thy Holy Spirit, and never suffer me to seek elsewhere my consolation and joy.

2*nd Point.*—The Holy Spirit dwells within the heart of the true disciples of Jesus.

'But you shall know Him, because He shall abide with you, and shall be in you' (John xiv. 17). The disciples of Jesus Christ make profession of rejecting the frivolous and exterior advantages which the world esteems and seeks after; but how greatly are they not rewarded for this generous contempt by the interior graces which they receive from above! The Holy Spirit delights to dwell within them; they possess Him, they know Him, and prefer Him to every good. And in very truth, how happy is the soul which has received this inestimable gift of God, or rather, this God Who is the Author of all His gifts! With what peace and pure delights does not this sweetest of all guests overwhelm the souls He deigns to visit! Divine Spirit, infinite Source of all consolation, come! my soul calls Thee and desires Thee ardently. If to possess Thee

it is necessary to despise the world, it is with joy that I this day renew the protestations I have so often made Thee to have nothing to do with it. If I must mortify my passions, I will labour with joy at the task. Come, then, O divine Spirit, come and renovate my soul, and make it worthy of Thee.

Colloquy with the Three Persons of the Adorable Trinity.—Let us pay our homage of adoration and love. Let us thank God the Father for having given us His Son to save us, and His Holy Spirit to sanctify us. Let us thank our blessed Lord also for having expiated our sins, and thereby merited for us the grace to receive the Paraclete. Let us implore this Spirit of truth to take possession of our souls, and to banish from them all that is opposed to Him.

Resolutions.—Let us call down on us the Holy Spirit by frequent elevations of the heart. Let us practise some acts of mortification, especially such as are interior, the better to prepare ourselves to receive Him.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—'Send forth Thy spirit, O Lord, and they shall be created, and Thou shalt renew the face of the earth.'

Prayer.—Pater Noster.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CXCIX.

JESUS PROMISES HIS APOSTLES NEVER TO ABANDON THEM.

'I will not leave you orphans: I will come to you. Yet a little while, and the world seeth Me no more. But you see Me, because I live, and you shall live. In that day you shall know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.'—JOHN xiv. 18, seq.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—Same as before, page 233.

2nd Prelude.—Divine Jesus, grant me grace to draw together more and more closely each day the precious ties which unite me to Thee.

1st Point.—Jesus promises His disciples that they shall see Him again.

Jesus adds promise to promise, in order to console His afflicted disciples for His approaching separation from them. 'I will not leave you orphans,' He says to them; 'I will come to you.' Then He adds: 'Yet a little while, and the world seeth Me no more; but you see Me, because I live, and you shall live' (John xiv. 19). These words explain the preceding ones; 'I will not leave you orphans.' It is by His grace and the Sacrament of His love that Jesus will come again in the midst of His dear disciples, as a good father in the midst of His children; then will He live the life of glory, and His apostles the life of grace. They are to see Him with the eyes of their body before His Ascension, and afterwards with the eyes of faith in the Eucharistic species. As to the world, which only relishes the pleasures of the senses and external things, it shall see Him no more; it will not be worthy to see Him; miserable world, which is wilfully blind, and merits to be left in its darkness! Happy disciples, who know Jesus, who love Him, and deserve that He should never abandon them! O my Jesus, the sweetest and most loving of all fathers, remember that I am Thy child, and cause me to bear within me those words so calculated to overwhelm me with joy. 'I will not leave you an orphan'; preserve me from the death of sin and from the blindness of the spirit of the world; come to me, O my sovereign Good, and never permit me to be separated from Thee.

2nd Point.—Jesus promises His disciples to give them to understand the mysteries of love which He has worked in their behalf.

'In that day you shall know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you' (John xiv. 20). These words of our adorable Saviour reveal to us the sublime

dignity to which His Incarnation and Death have exalted us. He speaks of the time when His apostles shall receive the Holy Ghost, and He says to them: 'You shall then know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you;' you shall know that, being the Eternal Word, the only Son equal to My Father, I am with Him one and the same God; that I have united My sacred Person to your nature; that I have united you to Myself; and that thus, by a priceless chain, of which My love has formed and united all the links, I have exalted you even to My Father, and rendered you participators in the divine nature. O my Jesus, what gratitude could ever repay such benefits? At least, my happiness shall be to sing eternally the extent of Thy goodness, the greatness of Thy love, and the infinitude of Thy mercies.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us adore Him as our God, our Saviour, and our Father; let us return Him lively acts of thanksgiving for the inestimable benefits which He has procured for us by His Incarnation and Death; let us beg of Him to unite us to Himself by detaching us from the world and from ourselves; let us give ourselves entirely to Him, and offer Him the sacrifice of all affections opposed to His love.

Resolution.—To do all our actions in union with Jesus.

Offering of the Resolution, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—The Son of God has become my brother, that I may become the child of God.

Prayer.—Soul of Christ, etc., page 4.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CC.

THE NATURE AND RECOMPENSE OF THE TRUE LOVE OF GOD.

'He that hath My commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me. And he that loveth Me, shall be loved of My Father; and I will love Him, and will manifest myself to Him.' —JOHN xiv. 21.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude*, page 233.

2*nd Prelude.*—My God, grant me grace to love Thee with a strong and generous love, which may cause me to keep all Thy commandments.

1*st Point.*—The true love of God is proved by deeds.

'He that hath My commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me' (John xiv. 21). True love does not consist in words, nor even in feelings, but in deeds. As fire which is always active, and is only extinguished when no more fuel is supplied for it to consume, so divine love, when it has taken possession of a heart, acts continually; and, when it ceases to act, it is a certain proof that it has ceased to be there. According to this rule, it is easy for me to discover if I possess this divine treasure. I have only to cast a glance on the manner in which I observe the commandments of our Lord to see what zeal I possess to accomplish His holy will and seek after His good pleasure. . . . O my God, I cannot conceal it: my love for Thee is very imperfect, since I am so wanting in fervour in Thy service. Ah! do not permit me to languish any longer in this culpable coldness; strengthen the resolution I now make at Thy feet to observe through love all Thy divine precepts.

2*nd Point.*—God rewards works done for His love by an increase of grace to love Him more and more.

'He that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I

will love Him and manifest Myself to Him. . . . If any one love Me, he will keep My word, and My Father will love him, and We will come to him, and will make Our abode with him' (John xiv. 21, 23). These words describe to us admirably how our Lord recompenses our first efforts, and then gradually increases divine charity within our souls. 'If anyone keep My word,' Jesus says, 'he it is that loveth Me; and he that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will manifest Myself to him.' Behold the recompense of the first efforts of love; the nature of love is to go on increasing, for if Jesus discovers Himself to the soul, it knows Him better; and how can it know Him better without loving Him more? This new degree of love produces greater fidelity, since, if fidelity produces love according to these words, 'He that keepeth My commandments, he it is that loveth Me,' love in its turn produces fidelity: 'If anyone loveth Me, he will keep My word.' To these renewed proofs of an increasing charity the Lord will respond by more abundant graces. 'And My Father will love Him, and will come to him'—We, the three Persons of the adorable Trinity, Who are love itself —'and will make Our abode with him;' We will take possession of his soul, and will repose therein with delight; We will rejoice in overwhelming him with gifts, and in causing him to taste ineffable consolations. What a magnificent promise! Is it not calculated to inspire us with the most perfect generosity in the service of so good a Master?

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us adore Him as the Master and Model of perfect charity. Let us ask His pardon for our coldness, and renounce it. Let us beg of Him to inflame us with His holy love, and to give us grace to make greater progress in it each day.

Resolution.—To do all our actions through love, and consequently in a manner conformable to the commandments of God and to the spirit of the Gospel.

Offering of the Resolution, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—'God is love.'
Prayer.—Receive, O Lord, etc., page 43.
Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CCI.

JESUS GIVES HIS PEACE TO HIS APOSTLES.

'These things have I spoken to you, abiding with you. But the Paraclete, the Holy Ghost, Whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring all things to your mind, whatsoever I shall have said to you. Peace I leave with you; My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth do I give unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it be afraid.'—JOHN xiv. 25, 26, 27.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—Remain once more in spirit in the supper-room, in the midst of the apostles, close to Jesus.

2*nd Prelude.*—Divine Jesus, give me Thy peace, and grant that I may never lose it.

1*st Point.*—Jesus gives His peace to His disciples.

'Peace I leave with you; My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth do I give unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it be afraid' (John xiv. 27). Jesus, on quitting His disciples, leaves them His peace; He gives the same to all who serve Him. He does not act as the world does, which wishes peace, but cannot give it; He gives it in effect, and desires that all His true disciples should enjoy it. What a precious treasure is the peace of Jesus! It procures a sweet repose for our souls even in the midst of tribulations, and causes them to taste beforehand something of the delights of heaven. If I appreciate so great a gift as much as it deserves, I ought to be faithful to preserve it carefully, for Jesus, after having said 'I give you My peace,' adds: 'Let not your heart be troubled;' that is to say, Do not allow My peace

to be taken from you after having received it. I ought in consequence to avoid all that can trouble my soul: faint-heartedness, human fear, the spirit of the world, and, above all, sin. I ought to unite myself to Jesus with fidelity and confidence. O my adorable Saviour, confirm me in Thy peace, and give me strength to sustain every combat that may preserve it within me.

2nd Point.—The peace of Jesus Christ is not like the peace of the world.

'Peace I leave with you; My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth do I give unto you' (John xiv. 27). The peace of Jesus Christ is very different from that of the world. To judge by the exterior alone, it would seem that worldlings rejoice in profound peace and perfect happiness when they succeed according to their desires; but these deceitful appearances conceal bitter griefs, cares, and remorse, passions which pleasures irritate instead of satisfying. The peace of Jesus, on the contrary, is wholly interior. It is in the heart of the just that it fixes its dwelling; and, whilst afflictions and trials surround it on every side, the soul of the just man, like a deep sea whose surface alone can be agitated by the storm, remains fixed in repose and peace. O my Jesus, who would not despise the false and deceitful joys of those who do not belong to Thee, in order to seek ardently for that peace which Thou dost give to Thy true disciples? Ah! may that solid peace be ever the object of my desires, and may I spare neither sacrifices nor combats to acquire it and keep it!

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us thank Him for the precious gift He makes us of His peace. Let us beg of Him to cause us to taste how sweet it is, that so we may prefer it to everything else, and neglect nothing to possess it. Let us renew our baptismal promises, in order to unite us more closely to Jesus Christ, by detaching us from the world.

Resolution.—To combat our vicious inclinations cour-

ageously, in order to dispose ourselves to receive the peace of Jesus Christ.

Offering of the Resolution, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—Jesus, God of peace, have mercy on me!

Prayer.—Soul of Christ, etc., page 4.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CCII.

THE ADVANTAGES OF SUFFERINGS.

'I am the true vine, and My father is the husbandman. Every branch in Me, that beareth not fruit, He will take away; and every one that beareth fruit, He will purge it, that it may bring forth more fruit.'—JOHN xv. 1, 2.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—Same as before, page 242.

2*nd Prelude.*—Give me strength, O my God, to accept generously and support courageously whatever painful trials Thy divine wisdom may judge necessary for the sanctification of my soul.

1*st Point.*—The sufferings of the just are marks of the love God bears them.

'I am the true vine, and My father is the husbandman; every branch in Me that beareth not fruit He will take away; and every one that beareth fruit He will purge it, that it may bring forth more fruit' (John xv. 1, 2). It is through the trials and afflictions of this life that our Lord is pleased to perfect His elect; the tribulations of various kinds which Providence contrives for them are so many operations of the pruning knife which destroys in them what would be displeasing to Him and hinder them from producing the fruits of salvation, which He expects from them. If I be a true Christian, I ought not to look upon sufferings and afflictions as real evils, but on the contrary,

as marks of predestination and precious pledges of the love of my God. Jesus, my adorable Master, Who likens Himself here to the vine, to which I am united as a branch, has been the first to experience the rigour of the salutary knife which is to preserve me from barrenness and death; could I wish, after this, to rebel against the hand of my heavenly Father, and refuse to undergo the trifling operations to which He wishes to submit me? No, my God, I will not be so far my own enemy; I know that the branches Thou dost not prune are cast away and reprobated; I prefer to support in this life all the severity of Thy strokes, rather than be exposed to lose Thee for eternity.

2nd Point.—The sufferings of the just serve to enrich them with merits, and to make them advance in virtue.

'I am the true vine, and My father is the husbandman. Every branch in Me that beareth not fruit, He will take away; and every one that beareth fruit, He will purge it that it may bring forth more fruit' (John xv. 1, 2). The greatest advantage that we can reap from sufferings and trials, is without comparison the abundance of the graces and merits we derive from them; it is in tribulation and pain, both of soul and body, that solid virtues are engendered and brought to perfection; then it is that we acquire union and conformity with Jesus, that we become pleasing to Him, and procure Him infinite glory. How then can I refuse to accept willingly, and even to desire passing trials, which have such happy results? O my God, I understand that the advantages attached to sufferings infinitely surpass all that is bitter in them, and that if I possess a true zeal for my own solid interests, I ought to look upon them as fruitful sources of spiritual riches; I believe this, but, alas! my weakness is so great that I have not the courage to act conformably to the lights Thou dost give me; help me then, O my God, Who art my entire strength; enlighten my mind more and more; inflame my heart, and grant that I may bless Thee when-

ever it shall please Thy love to send me trials, or impose on me any sacrifice.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us pay Him our homage of adoration, love, and thanksgiving, as to the divine Saviour Who vouchsafes to unite us to Himself, and to communicate His life to us, as the vine communicates its nourishment to the branches wherewith it is loaded. Let us ask Him for an esteem for and love of sufferings, since their effect is to cause us to bear fruit in Him. Let us accept willingly all the trials He may please to send us.

Resolution.—To receive with submission, and if possible with joy, all the trials God shall send us.

Offering of the Resolution, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—We must suffer with Jesus, that we may be glorified with Jesus.

Prayer.—Pater Noster.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CCIII.

JESUS WILLS THAT WE ABIDE IN HIM.

'Abide in Me; and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abide in the vine, so neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you the branches; he that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit: for without Me you can do nothing.'—JOHN xv. 4, 5.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—The same, page 242.

2*nd Prelude.*—Divine Jesus, the only life of my soul, unite Thyself to me and me to Thee, and never permit me to be separated from Thee.

1*st Point.*—It is only by union with Jesus that we can be pleasing to our heavenly Father.

'He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same beareth

much fruit: for without Me you can do nothing' (John xv. 5). God the Father has His eyes continually on us, that He may collect the fruits of life we ought to produce; He does not judge of our deeds as men judge of them, who see only the exterior; the more closely we are united to His well beloved Son, the greater value do our actions possess in His eyes. What care ought I not then to have to follow this advice of my divine Master: 'Remain in Me, and I in thee.' I know the means of dwelling in Him, and of causing Him to dwell in me; I know that this holy union is produced by sanctifying grace, and that it becomes perfect by conformity with Jesus and dependence on Him; I know that prayer, recollection, and fidelity to grace, cause Jesus Christ to dwell within me and introduce me to His divine Heart. Oh, why am I so wanting in fidelity in making use of these powerful means? O my Jesus! inspire me with an ardent desire to be united to Thee, and never allow me to neglect any means of obtaining so precious a grace.

2nd Point.—Those who are not united to Jesus, deserve to be rejected by His heavenly Father.

'If any one abide not in Me, he shall be cast forth as a useless branch' (John xv. 6). God has created us only for His glory, and we cannot procure this except through union with Jesus. He Himself says to us: 'Without Me you can do nothing.' If we remain separated from our divine Saviour, we are useless to Him, since we are not fulfilling the only end for which our Lord has placed us on the earth. The useless branch shall be cast away; says our Lord, 'They shall gather it up and cast it into the fire, and it burneth' (John xv. 6). Awful threat, which ought to penetrate with salutary fear all who are far removed from Jesus. O my divine Saviour! It is from love that Thou speakest to us thus; Thou desirest us to avoid so dreadful a misfortune, and it is for the same reason Thou seekest to arouse by fear those souls Thy divine tenderness cannot move. Ah! may I ever receive

and preserve with care Thy divine words. Alas! my soul has been up to the present dry and withered, like unto the branch separated from the vine. It deserves to be destroyed; consume it then, but let it be with the sacred flames of Thy love, that so it may escape the avenging fire enkindled by Thy justice.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us adore Him as our divine Master, Who alone can render us agreeable to His heavenly Father. Let us humble ourselves at His feet for not being more closely united to Him, begging Him to change our dispositions, and inspire us with a holy earnestness to cement more and more strongly the sweet ties of this precious union. Let us generously make Him the sacrifice of all that could be an obstacle to this union, begging Him to bless our good resolutions.

Resolution.—To oblige ourselves to perform each one of our actions as our Lord would have done it had He been in our place.

Offering of the Resolution, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—'He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit' (John xv. 5).

Prayer.—Soul of Christ, etc., page 4.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CCIV.

THE TRUE LOVE OF GOD CONSISTS IN KEEPING HIS COMMANDMENTS.

'In this is My Father glorified, that you bring forth very much fruit, and become My disciples. As the Father hath loved Me, I also have loved you. Abide in My love. If you keep My commandments, you shall abide in My love: as I also have kept My Father's commandments, and do abide in His love. These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may be in you, and your joy may be filled.'—JOHN xv. 8-11.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—The same, page 242.

2*nd Prelude.*—Grant me grace, O Jesus, to bring forth much fruit for the glory of Thy Father.

1*st Point.*—Jesus recalls to us the motive which ought to induce us to have a true love for Him.

'In this is My Father glorified, that you bring forth very much fruit, and become My disciples. As the Father hath loved Me, I also have loved you. Abide in My love' (John xv. 8, 9). Our adorable Lord urges us, by all the motives capable of touching us, to love Him with a true and efficacious love; He assures us that our fidelity and our fervour will procure His Father's glory, that glory for which He has not shrunk from humbling Himself even to assume the form of us sinful men, and to accept the ignominies and torments of death. He reminds us of the immense love He bears us, a love so great that He compares it to the love His Father has borne Him from all eternity, and He concludes by giving us the touching injunction never to break the ties which unite us to Him, and never to abandon His Sacred Heart. 'Abide in My love.' Could I be sufficiently ungrateful to resist so much tenderness and goodness, to refuse to produce the fruits of sanctity which Jesus asks of me, or still to remain in cul-

pable negligence? No, my Jesus; I will serve Thee zealously, I will enter into the designs of Thy divine Heart for the glory of Thy Father.

2nd Point.—Jesus points out to us the means of having a true love for Him.

'If you keep My commandments, you shall abide in My love: as I also have kept My Father's commandments, and do abide in His love' (John xv. 10). Again, it is fidelity in fulfilling the will of God in all things that Jesus points out as the most certain mark of love; He now reminds us of His own example, and engages us to imitate it. Let us cast a glance on the manner in which He has fulfilled this divine will: His entire life was one perpetual exercise of the most perfect and generous obedience. He submitted to all the ordinances of the law of Moses, although they were very severe, and He was in no wise obliged to them; He sought in all things the good pleasure of His Father: His food was to do His holy will; in fine, He became obedient unto death, even to the death of the Cross. Oh! what rapid progress divine love would make within us if we retraced in our conduct the obedience of Jesus! We should then enjoy the sweetest and most abundant consolations, as we are assured by the words immediately following those we are meditating: 'These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may be in you, and your joy may be filled' (John xv. 11). O my Jesus, grant me grace to imitate Thy obedience as perfectly as I can, that so I may taste the sweetness of Thy love.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us adore Him as our Master, our Model, and our Saviour. Let us ask of Him the grace to walk in His footsteps, by obeying the will of His Father in all things through love. Let us implore His forgiveness for the numberless faults we have committed against this holy obedience, making firm resolutions for the future.

Resolution.—To be attentive to seek in all our actions the accomplishment of the will of God.

Offering of the Resolution, page 3.
Spiritual Bouquet.—'If you keep My commandments, you shall abide in My love' (John xv. 11).
Prayer.—Receive, O Lord, etc., page 43.
Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CCV.

JESUS RETURNS TO THE PRECEPT OF FRATERNAL CHARITY.

'This is My commandment, that you love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love than this no man hath, that a man lay down his life for his friends. You are My friends, if you do the things that I command you.'—JOHN xv. 12, seq.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.
1*st Prelude.*—The same, page 242.
2*nd Prelude.*—Divine Jesus, give me Thy charity: grant that I may love my neighbour with a strong and generous love, as Thou hast commanded.
1*st Point.*—What the extent of our charity towards our neighbour ought to be.

'This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you' (John xv. 12). Since our divine Saviour returns so constantly to this precept, let us not grow weary of meditating on it, and let us endeavour to-day to understand well its full extent. The love which Jesus has had for us He gives us as the model of that which we must have for our neighbour, and to the end that we may well understand how entire and perfect this imitation ought to be, He immediately adds, 'Greater love than this no man hath, that a man lay down his life for his friends' (John xv. 13). We ought in consequence unceasingly to increase and extend our love, since we can never equal the charity of which our adorable Saviour has given us the

example; let us fathom our heart, and see if it contain within it the characters of true charity. 'Charity,' says St. Paul, 'is patient, is kind; charity envieth not, dealeth not perversely; is not puffed up, is not ambitious, seeketh not her own, is not provoked to anger, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth with the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things' (1 Cor. xiii. 4-7). O my Jesus! how far removed am I from the perfect charity Thou dost command me to possess! Oh! I beg of Thee to purify my heart; change it, and vouchsafe to render it in all things like unto Thine.

2nd Point.—The esteem we ought to have for charity towards our neighbour.

'You are My friends, if you do the things that I command you' (John xv. 14). Could Jesus engage us in a more pressing manner to practise towards others the charity which He commands? After having proposed His own example unto us, He promises us His friendship. Let us understand, therefore, that this virtue is the most precious of all, and the dearest to the Sacred Heart of Jesus; is the virtue which we ought to love and practise before all others; let us conceive for it an esteem like unto that which the great apostle had when he said: 'If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. And if I should have prophecy, and should know all mysteries, and all knowledge, and if I should have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And if I should distribute all my goods to feed the poor, and if I should deliver my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing' (1 Cor. xiii. 1, seq). O my divine Saviour, implant within me a true and generous charity, which, in uniting me to others, may render me worthy of Thy divine friendship.

Colloquy with our Lord. — Let us adore Him as the

Master and Model of perfect charity, and beg of Him to teach us how to practise this precious virtue. Let us ask His pardon for the faults by which we have offended against it. Let us make at His feet several acts of the love of our neighbour, and resolve firmly to practise charity, with all the perfection of which we are capable.

Resolution.—To bear the faults of others with meekness.

Offering of the Resolution, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—'You are My friends, if you do the things that I command you' (John xv. 14).

Prayer.—Soul of Christ, etc., page 4.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CCVI.

JESUS CALLS US HIS FRIENDS, AND DEIGNS TO LOOK ON US AS SUCH.

'I will not now call you servants, for the servant knoweth not what his lord doth. But I have called you friends, because all things whatsoever I have heard of My Father, I have made known to you. You have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you.'—JOHN xv. 15, 16.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—As before, page 242.

2*nd Prelude.*—I beg of Thee, my divine Lord, to penetrate my heart with lively gratitude towards Thee.

1*st Point.*—Jesus deigns to call Himself our Friend; He fulfils that office completely in our regard.

'I will not now call you servants, for the servant knoweth not what his lord doth. But I have called you friends, because all things whatsoever I have heard of My Father, I have made known to you' (John xv. 15). It is Jesus, our God and Saviour, who addresses these words to us; with what holy joy then ought they not to penetrate us!

We are the friends of the Son of God; we possess rights over His adorable Heart justly claimed by this sweet and glorious title; we ever find in Him a Confidant and Consoler in our troubles; a Supporter in our weakness, a Protector in dangers, an inexhaustible Source of supply in our wants. But if Jesus deigns thus to be everything to us, we ought on our part to fulfil towards this incomparable Friend all the duties which friendship imposes. We ought to love Him with an undivided love, prefer Him to all, and seek rest and consolation in Him alone. We ought to show ourselves zealous for His interests and glory, declaring ourselves openly for Him when His enemies outrage Him, and trying to console Him, by our fidelity and love, for the culpable insensibility of those who despise His love. How do I acquit myself of these sacred obligations?

2nd Point.—Jesus has made choice of us to honour us with His friendship, without any merit on our part.

'It is not you who have chosen Me, but I have chosen you.' Jesus has chosen us from an infinite number of possible beings, has drawn us forth from nothing and given us life; He has singled out us from an innumerable multitude of creatures endowed with reason, and has caused us to be born in the bosom of the true Church. He has elected us out of a prodigious number of Christians to overwhelm us with His choicest favours, and to preserve us from the great dangers to which our innocence would have been exposed if His Providence had not had a truly paternal care of us. He has fixed upon us to communicate to us more vivid lights, and more powerful attraction to the practice of virtue. He has picked us out to unveil to us the secrets of His adorable Heart, and open to us its treasures. In fine, He has selected us without any merit on our part, even foreseeing that we should so often render ourselves unworthy of His benefits. O my Saviour, what goodness! How can I help being penetrated with the most lively gratitude, how can I in my turn refuse to choose Thee for my only love, and the divine object of all my affections?

How can I refuse to put all my confidence in Thee? Ah! Lord, Thou hast chosen me without any merit of mine; wilt Thou reject me when I have no other desire than to love Thee with all my heart?

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us offer Him our homage of adoration and love, thanking Him with the most lively gratitude for having deigned to choose us and to honour us with His divine friendship. Let us implore His pardon, with sincere repentance, for the ingratitude and coldness of which we have been guilty towards Him, and let us consecrate ourselves entirely to His love.

Resolution.—To give proof of our gratitude to Jesus, by refusing nothing to-day to the interior inspirations of His grace.

Offering of the Resolution, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—'You have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you' (John xv. 16).

Prayer.—Receive, O Lord, etc., page 43.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CCVII.

JESUS FORTIFIES HIS DISCIPLES AGAINST THE PERSECUTIONS OF THE WORLD.

'If the world hate you, know ye that it hath hated Me before you. If you had been of the world, the world would love its own: but because you are not of the world, therefore the world hateth you.'—JOHN xv. 18, 19.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—Remain yet awhile in the supper-room, and listen to Jesus.

2*nd Prelude.*—My divine Lord, I beg of Thee to inspire me with a sovereign contempt for the world and its judgments.

1*st Point.*—The world hates Jesus and His disciples.

'If the world hate you, know that it hath hated Me

before you' (John xv. 18). The world, which only loves and seeks after that which will flatter the senses, pride, and ambition, cannot relish or approve the conduct of the true disciples of Jesus; this is too formally opposed to its own, consequently it condemns it; but it does not limit itself to this, as the lesson which condemns its irregularities is a silent one. It hates goodness, and persecutes those whom it cannot persuade to join in its view of things and in its way of acting. Oh, how glorious is this persecution to the eyes of faith! It is when we are truly hated by the world, when we have to bear its contempt and injustice, that we are combating under the standard of Jesus, our divine head. He was the first to be for this perverse world a sign of contradiction, and He has been the first to overcome it by becoming an apparent victim of its fury. He has merited for us the grace to imitate His combats and share His triumphs. O my Jesus—my divine King! all my glory consists in serving under the standard of the Cross. Give me the strength, to brave not only the childish fears of human respect, but likewise the open persecution of a world Thou hast reprobated, and which merits nothing but our deepest contempt.

2nd Point.—It is glorious and consoling for true Christians to be hated by the world.

'If you had been of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, therefore the world hateth you' (John xv. 19). The hatred of the world is a proof that we do not belong to it, and consequently a mark of predestination. Far from dreading this, we ought to rejoice in it, if God honours us by rendering us the object of it; and if the world approves of us, we should even fear that we are not sufficiently opposed to it. Let us not deceive ourselves; we may belong to the world in heart, even when we do not exteriorly give ourselves up to all its pleasures and disorders. If we love and seek after the esteem of creatures, if we are ambitious of honours, fortune, the comforts of a

life passed in luxury and abundance, if we are strangers to that mortification of the mind, and heart, and senses, which distinguish the true disciples of Jesus, if we possess the spirit of the world, and belong to it in affection and sentiment. O my Jesus, what are my dispositions regarding this dangerous spirit? Vouchsafe to make them known unto me, and never suffer me to be blind on so important a point. Ah! Lord, I have but too great reason for believing that I am not entirely free from a worldly spirit; deign to deliver me from it, and give me grace to practise all the virtues which belong to a true Christian: humility, detachment, love of the cross, etc.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us adore Him as our only Lord, and renew the sacred engagements of our baptism. Let us protest that we abhor and reject with horror the spirit, maxims, and conduct, of the world, and let us renounce every inclination that could make us approach near to it. Let us ask Jesus for grace to attach ourselves to Him alone, and to place all our happiness and glory in being despised by the world—His enemy and ours.

Resolution.—To brave human respect courageously, if any opportunity of doing so should present itself to-day. —To make some acts of humility and self-renunciation.

Offering of the Resolution, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—I belong not to the world, but to Jesus Christ.

Prayer.—Receive, O Lord, etc., page 43.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CCVIII.

THE CAUSE OF CONDEMNATION IN THE JEWS.

'If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have sin; but now they have no excuse for their sin. He that hateth Me hateth My Father also.'—JOHN xv. 22, 23.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—The same, page 255.

2*nd Prelude.*—Never suffer me, O Jesus, to abuse the lights and graces which Thou dost deign to vouchsafe to me.

1*st Point.*—The abuse of God's graces renders a sinner inexcusable.

'If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have sin; but now they have no excuse for their sin' (John xv. 22). The abuse of grace and voluntary obduracy of heart prepares for those who are guilty of it, the most severe judgments; and the sinner cannot cause a more sensible pain to the infinitely merciful Heart of Jesus than thus to turn to his loss the benefits which, in the designs of this divine Saviour, ought to have procured his salvation. Have I never had anything similar to reproach myself with? Have I been always faithful to profit by all the lights which have been granted me? Alas! how often have I not shut my eyes that I might not see, and my ears that I might not hear, when my Lord asked something of me that I would not grant Him! . . . Ah! I have merited a thousand times that these graces should be withdrawn from me, since I have abused them; but the Lord willed it not. He has waited for me, and still waits for me; He urges me at this moment to repair my past ingratitude by fidelity and love. O my God, I return thanks to Thy infinite goodness; I will no longer resist Thee; command me what Thou shalt please, and I promise to accomplish it with the help of Thy holy grace.

2*nd Point.*—The wicked hate Jesus; we ought to indemnify Him for the outrages He receives from them.

'He that hateth Me hateth My Father also' (John xv. 23). There are few wicked enough to hate God formally; but, unfortunately, it is not rare to meet with those who hate Him indirectly. Some hate His justice, which punishes sin; others, His holiness, which can suffer nothing defiled; others hate the holy severity of His law and His gospel; others extend their hatred to His Church and His ministers; others, in fine—and this causes us to shudder—go so far as to hate Jesus Christ, their Saviour and Redeemer, to blaspheme against Him, to deny His divinity, and to turn souls away from His love and service. What subjects of grief for us, if we are as zealous as we ought to be for the glory of this divine Saviour! His adorable Heart, penetrated with grief at the sight of such black ingratitude, expects us to heal His wounded tenderness. Will not this sight inflame our love? Can we not surmount with courage the difficulties of virtue, and make use of every means to cause that Sacred Heart to be loved, which has so much loved the world, and is so little loved by it?

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us adore Him as the Word of God come upon the earth to instruct mankind. Let us grieve over the obduracy of the Jews and of sinners. Let us above all try to conceive a lively sorrow at the sight of our own resistances to grace. Let us ask forgiveness of Jesus for ourselves and for all sinners. Let us implore all the graces we stand in need of, in order to place us in a state to offer Him reparation, and homage really worthy of Himself.

Resolution.—To follow faithfully to-day all the inspirations of grace.

Offering of the Resolution, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—'Unto whomsoever much is given, of him much shall be required' (Luke xii. 48).

Prayer.—Pater Noster.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CCIX.

THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE APOSTLES HAVE GIVEN TESTIMONY TO JESUS CHRIST.

'When the Paraclete cometh, Whom I will send you from the Father, the Spirit of Truth, Who proceedeth from the Father, He shall give testimony of Me. And you shall give testimony, because you are with Me from the beginning.'—JOHN xv. 26, 27.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude*, page 255.

2*nd Prelude.*—Grant me grace, O my divine Saviour, to give testimony of Thee by the holiness of my life, and my courage in despising human respect.

1*st Point.*—The Holy Ghost has given testimony of Jesus Christ.

'When the Paraclete cometh, Whom I will send you from the Father, the Spirit of Truth, Who proceedeth from the Father, He shall give testimony of Me' (John xv. 26). The mission of the Holy Spirit was, so to speak, to put the finishing stroke to the work which Jesus Christ had commenced; thus we see, in fact, that it was not until after Pentecost that the Church, limited up to that time to a very small number of disciples, commenced to extend and establish itself on the ruins of Judaism and idolatry. The Holy Spirit gave testimony of Jesus Christ by penetrating the minds and hearts of men with His knowledge and His love. His secret unction gave them an interior intelligence of the proofs which this adorable Saviour had given them of His divinity. It is by the grace of the Holy Spirit that faithful souls still know Jesus with that intimate knowledge which produces love and imitation. Oh! how desirable is the presence of this Holy Spirit! What lights and heavenly favours does He not bring with Him! Give me, O Lord, this Spirit of Truth; may He enlighten

me, inflame me, and unite me to Jesus by bonds of love which nothing may ever be able to break.

2nd Point.—The disciples of Jesus Christ ought to give testimony of Him.

'And you shall give testimony of Me' (John xv. 27). The apostles, filled with the Holy Ghost, gave testimony of Jesus Christ by their preaching, their miracles, and the shedding of their blood. We are not called to things so exalted, yet we have received the same Holy Spirit, we serve the same Master, and we ought to give testimony of Him. It is by a holy life, and by conforming our conduct in all things to the maxims of the Gospel, that we can fulfil this sacred duty. We ought to be the light and good odour of Jesus, but above all we ought to honour Him with special love, we to whom He has deigned to manifest all the secrets of His adorable Heart. O my divine Saviour, how far am I from fulfilling as I ought so holy an obligation! I ought to bear testimony to the virtues of Thy Sacred Heart by my humility, my meekness, my kind and preventing charity; but nothing is seen in me but my pride, my impatience, my self-love, and my insensibility towards others. I ought to glory in belonging to Thee, and in declaring myself openly for Thee before Thy enemies, but Thou knowest, alas! the extent of my weakness when there is question of bearing the least raillery, or the smallest contradiction for Thy sake. How can I then be reckoned among the number of Thy faithful disciples? O my adorable Saviour, put an end to my infidelities; help me with Thy grace, fill me with Thy Spirit. May He be my light in my doubts, my counsel and strength in the assaults of the enemy, and may He load me with His holy gifts. I promise Thee never more to place any obstacle to the effects He desires to produce in my soul for Thy glory and my sanctification.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us humble ourselves at His feet when we compare all that the apostles and first Christians did, to render testimony to His divinity, with

our cowardly and indifferent conduct. Let us beg of Him to fill our souls with zeal for His glory, and to give us strength to overcome our sluggishness, to vanquish our corrupt inclinations, and to be henceforth His worthy disciples, by copying faithfully all His magnificent virtues.

Resolution.—To practise the virtue we need the most, that we may become the good odour of Jesus Christ and give testimony of Him.

Offering of the Resolution, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—Grant, O my Jesus, that I may bear testimony to Thee by my works.

Prayer.—Receive, O Lord, etc., page 43.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CCX.

THE NECESSITY OF TRIALS AND AFFLICTIONS.

'But because I have spoken these things to you, sorrow hath filled your hearts. But I tell you the truth: it is expedient to you that I go; for if I go not, the Paraclete will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you.'—JOHN xvi. 6, 7.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—The same, page 255.

2*nd Prelude.*—Grant me grace, O my Jesus, to know the value of afflictions, and to receive with submission all those it shall please Thee to send me.

1*st Point.*—It was expedient for the apostles to be deprived of the sensible presence of Jesus.

'I tell you the truth: it is expedient to you that I go; for if I go not, the Paraclete will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you' (John xvi. 7). It was necessary that Jesus should meet His death before the apostles received the Holy Ghost; not only because the coming of this divine Spirit was to be one of the fruits of His Passion, but, again, that they should be prepared to receive

Him by trials and afflictions. The sensible presence of their divine Master overwhelmed them with sweetness and consolation; ever more and more they found in Him a tender Father Who provided for all their wants, a powerful Protector Who shielded them from every danger; they were like children when being nursed, reposing with safety on their mother's bosom. Such a state was no doubt advantageous to them; but if it had always continued, their virtue would never have acquired the strength and energy necessary for the preaching of the Gospel. It is in severe trials that souls are purified and brought to perfection, and it was expedient for the apostles to have experience of this before receiving the Spirit of strength. O Lord, how admirable is Thy conduct! Thou dost cause us to experience the sweetness of Thy presence, in order to gain our hearts; Thou makest trial succeed to consolation, to enrich us with merit, and Thou recompensest trial by new graces. I adore Thy wisdom with all respect, O God of goodness, and I abandon entirely to Thee the care of all that concerns me; treat me as Thou shalt please. I will receive consolations and trials equally with thanksgiving, since both the one and the other come equally from Thy paternal goodness.

2nd Point.—It is useful for us to be deprived for a time of the sensible presence of grace.

'Because I have spoken these things to you, sorrow hath filled your hearts. But I tell you the truth: it is expedient to you that I go' (John xvi. 6). Nothing is more painful to any one, who has tasted how sweet the Lord is, than to find himself deprived of the feeling of God's holy presence. Nevertheless, nothing is more to our advantage than such a trial, if we know how to profit by it. It is in times of obscurity and abandonment that we all experience our own weakness, become strengthened in humility, recognise the extreme need we have of our Lord's help, ask Him for it earnestly, and prepare to return Him faithfully all the glory of such help when we shall have ob-

tained it. Such dispositions move the divine Heart of God. Our tender Father, Who seeks to diffuse His graces only in humble souls, enriches them according to His will with His most precious gifts, and thus they reap advantages infinitely greater from the trial than any affliction they have undergone. Grant me grace, O my God, to be deeply penetrated with the value attached to sufferings; teach me to profit by all those it shall please Thee to send me, and to persevere in resignation and confidence, however prolonged may be Thy apparent severity.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us adore Him as our God, our Saviour, and Sovereign Good, begging of Him never to deprive us effectually of His holy presence and divine assistance; but let us at the same time accept His interior trials, and beg of Him to cause us to draw from them abundant fruits for our sanctification.

Resolution.—To support all aridity and interior trials with humble peace and entire resignation.

Offering of the Resolution, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—'It is expedient to you that I go.' 'Not my will, O Lord, but Thine be done.'

Prayer.—Pater Noster.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CCXI.

JESUS PROMISES HIS DISCIPLES THAT THE HOLY GHOST SHALL TEACH THEM ALL TRUTH.

'I have yet many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. But when He, the Spirit of Truth, has come, He will teach you all truth.'—JOHN xvi. 12, 13.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—Imagine yourself still in the supper-room, sitting at the table from which Jesus has just nourished His apostles with the divine Eucharist.

2nd Prelude.—Grant me grace, O Jesus, to await in peace Thy light when Thou dost defer to give it to me, and to profit carefully from it when Thou shalt grant it unto me.

1st Point.—Jesus bestows His lights according to our dispositions.

'I have yet many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now' (John xvi. 12). Our divine Saviour proceeds in the work of our sanctification with admirable wisdom. He communicates His lights to us by degrees only, lest we be dazzled by too broad a daylight before we are sufficiently strong to bear it and to profit from it. If we wish to enter into His designs, let us adore His divine Will, whether He please to enlighten us, or judge it better to leave us in darkness; but let us guard against neglecting graces received, for if Jesus deals kindly with involuntary weakness, He also at times punishes culpable resistance; and then the withdrawal of light may be followed by dangerous results, unless great efforts be used to repair past infidelities by humility and contrition. Let us listen to Jesus speaking the words to ourselves in the depth of our soul: 'I have yet many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now.' O my divine Saviour! I am forced to own that my sins and negligences in Thy service hinder me from receiving Thy holy instructions. What, then, shall I say to Thee? What shall I do? I know. I will address myself to Thy divine Heart; I will have recourse to Thy infinite goodness; I will implore of Thee to forget my ingratitude, and to be mindful of Thy mercy alone and of Thy love.

2nd Point.—It is the Holy Ghost Who gives us intelligence of the things of God.

'But when He, the Spirit of Truth, has come, He will teach you all truth' (John xvi. 13). The apostles had not a perfect understanding of all that Jesus had said to them until they had received the Holy Ghost. It was this Spirit of Light which enabled them to penetrate the

profound sense of the instructions of their divine Master, and reduce to practice all the lessons of virtue they had received from Him. Like them, we need the aid of this divine Spirit to become perfect disciples of Jesus; He it is Who renovates the soil of our hearts to fructify therein the Word of Life; it is He Who by His sacred fire enlightens and vivifies us. Oh! what intelligence we should acquire of the things of God if we had the happiness to draw down on us this holy Spirit, and retain Him in our hearts, to consult Him in our doubts, and invoke Him in our difficulties! How deeply would the truths of salvation affect us! How easy would the practice of virtue become to us! Ah! why do we not aspire after this happiness? The holy Spirit is essentially goodness and love; He is the Illuminator of hearts, the Author of all the gifts which can sanctify us; He is, above all, the Father of the poor, the sweet Consoler of souls penetrated with the sentiment of their misery. Let us say to Him with the most entire confidence: Holy Spirit, Thou hast created us; come and dwell with those who belong to Thee; replenish with heavenly graces those hearts which Thou Thyself hast formed.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us offer Him our homage of adoration and love. Let us thank Him for the attentive care which He has deigned to take of all that concerns our progress in virtue. Let us place ourselves in His hands, that He may dispose of us according to His good pleasure, and send us light or darkness as He shall please. Let us implore of Him to fill us with His holy Spirit. Let us also address ourselves to this adorable Spirit, inviting Him to take possession of our hearts, and promising Him to be faithful to all His inspirations.

Resolution.—To follow carefully and faithfully all the interior lights which are given us to acquire the virtues we need.

Offering of the Resolution, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—'Send forth Thy Spirit. . . . and Thou shalt renew the face of the earth.'

Prayer.—Pater Noster.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CCXII.

JESUS FORETELLS TO HIS DISCIPLES THAT THEY SHALL BE AFFLICTED IN THIS LIFE.

'Amen, amen, I say to you, that you shall lament and weep, but the world shall rejoice; and you shall be made sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy.'—JOHN xvi. 20.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude*, page 264.

2*nd Prelude.*—Grant me grace, O Jesus, to support with courage all the tribulations through which it shall please Thee to make me pass, that so I may arrive at joys so real that nothing may be able to deprive me of them.

1*st Point.*—The afflictions of the just are preferable to the foolish pleasures of the world.

'Amen, amen, I say to you, that you shall lament and weep, but the world shall rejoice' (John xvi. 20). Jesus, the Head and Model of the elect, never ceased to suffer from His birth to His death. They who wish sincerely to belong to Him must expect to share His chalice of bitterness. Everything conspires to furnish them with this food of the Cross, so hard to nature, but at the same time so salutary to the soul: the contradictions of the world, domestic sorrows, regret for their faults, the revolts of their vicious propensities, temptations, interior trials, are all so many means which divine Providence contrives to render them conformable to Jesus crucified. The votaries of the world, on the other hand, seem intoxicated with happiness; they give themselves up to their passions, pass from

pleasure to pleasure, seeking nothing but pastimes and rejoicings. But how greatly is their position to be pitied when compared to that of the just! Jesus is never present at their feastings or rejoicings. They do not walk in the footsteps of our divine Saviour; far from it: each step they take removes them further from Him. O my Jesus! where are these unhappy ones going? Ah! a thousand times I prefer the sufferings of Thy disciples to their senseless joys. I would rather weep and lament in Thy holy company, than laugh and rejoice with the votaries of the world! The tears shed for Thee are mingled with so much sweetness; Thou knowest so well how to support and console those who are faithful to Thee! Ah! fix my heart for ever in Thy holy service, by causing it to experience how sweet it is to unite its sufferings with Thine, and to endure them for Thy love.

2nd Point.—The afflictions of the just will be followed by eternal happiness.

'But your sorrow shall be changed into joy' (John xvi. 20). It is a very sweet consolation for the just to unite their sufferings to those of Jesus; but this powerful motive for keeping up their courage is not the only one presented to them. They know that he who sows in tears shall reap in joy; that the sufferings of this life bear no proportion to the recompense by which they will be one day rewarded. This hope supports them and fills them with a holy joy, even in the midst of the most severe trials. In truth, what a consolation it is to think we have for the witness of our combats a Saviour God, Whose Sacred Heart is for us that of a most tender Father, Who reckons up our efforts, receives every aspiration of our heart, covers us with His protection, and prepares a rich crown for us as the reward of our labours and fidelity; a God, truth itself, Who foretells to us the trials by which we shall be afflicted, and at the same time announces to us that our tears shall be changed into a joy that no man can deprive us of! O my Jesus! replenish me with a holy

ardour to labour and to suffer! May Thy love animate me, Thy promises encourage me, Thy example sustain me; grant that I may fill up the measure of suffering Thou hast destined for me from eternity, and that I may have the happiness, at the last moment of my life, to see my sorrow change into joy, as Thou hast promised me.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us thank Him for the goodness with which He encourages us to suffer, and for the promises which He makes us. Let us humble ourselves at His feet for having so often given way to impatience and discouragement under our trials, asking Him for grace to bear them in a more Christian spirit in future. Let us accept all the crosses He shall please to send us, uniting them to His.

Resolution.—To unite all our trials and contradictions to the sufferings of Jesus, and to bear them lovingly.

Offering of the Resolution, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—'Your sorrow shall be changed into joy.'

Prayer.—Soul of Christ, etc., page 4.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CCXIII.

JESUS RECOMMENDS HIS DISCIPLES TO PRAY.

'Ask, and you shall receive, that your joy may be full . . : You shall ask in My name, and I say not to you that I will ask the Father for you; for the Father Himself loveth you, because you have loved Me, and have believed that I came out from God.'—JOHN xvi. 24, 26, 27.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1st Prelude, page 264.

2nd Prelude.—Divine Jesus, be pleased to teach me how to pray by filling my heart with faith, confidence, and holy desires.

1*st Point.*—The efficacy of prayer.

'Ask, and you shall receive, that your joy may be full' (John xvi. 24). Jesus is about to leave His apostles; He repeats the assurance He has already given them several times of the success of their prayers, and encourages them to have recourse to this powerful means of salvation, by promising them joy full and perfect if they are faithful in practising it assiduously. The joy of the Holy Spirit is indeed one of the principal fruits of prayer when it is well made; it is this holy exercise which comforts us under trials, delivers us from interior troubles, from dulness of mind, gives us a holy facility for the practice of good works, and maintains us in liberty of spirit and interior vigour. If I have not up to the present reaped these precious advantages, to what cause is the fact to be attributed? Certainly not to prayer itself; the promise of Jesus Christ is formal: 'Ask, and you shall receive, that your joy may be full.' It is, then, because I do not ask as I ought; because I pray without fervour, without a desire of being heard, without sufficient attention; because my prayers are devoid of that confidence founded on the merits and on the goodness of Jesus, which obtains all from His adorable Heart. O my divine Saviour, help me to rectify so many defects; give me the spirit of prayer; teach me what I should ask of Thee, the manner in which I should ask it, and vouchsafe to heed my petitions according to Thy divine promises.

2*nd Point.*—The causes of the efficacy of prayer.

'You shall ask in My name, and I say not to you that I will ask the Father for you; for the Father Himself loveth you because you have loved Me, and have believed that I came out from God' (John xvi. 26, 27). Let us meditate on each of these words: 'You shall ask in My name.' The principal condition to render our prayers efficacious is to found them solely on the merits of our Saviour. 'And I say not to you that I will ask the Father for you, for the Father Himself loveth you.' Jesus

Christ vouchsafes to teach us that His Father, Who wills to be our Father also, has a love of benevolence for us which makes Him listen with kindness to our petitions. But what is the cause of this? Why does our heavenly Father honour us with His love? 'Because you have loved Me, and have believed that I came out from God.' Faith in Jesus Christ and His love are the two conditions for meriting to be dear unto His Father. Adorable Saviour, can I refuse to accept such sweet conditions? Thou art all things to me; how can I refuse to love Thee? No! I consecrate to Thee my heart with all its affections; grant that each day I may love Thee more and more; strengthen my faith, and render it practical, that so I may deserve to be loved by Thy Father, and to obtain from Him all my requests.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us adore Him as the true Son of God, our Saviour, and the prop of our hope. Let us ask His pardon for the defects in our prayers. Let us beg of Him to fill our hearts with those sentiments of faith, hope, and love with which they ought to be penetrated towards Him and towards His Father, and to teach us to pray in a manner to merit being heard.

Resolution.—To animate our prayers with faith and confidence, hoping for all graces through the merits of Jesus Christ.

Offering of the Resolution, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—'Ask, and you shall receive, that your joy may be full. My Father Himself loveth you, because you have loved Me' (John xvi. 24, 26).

Prayer.—Pater Noster.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CCXIV.

JESUS WISHES US TO POSSESS HIS PEACE, AND TO TRIUMPH OVER THE WORLD.

'These things have I spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you shall have distress; but have confidence, I have overcome the world.'—JOHN xvi. 33.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—The same, page 264.

2*nd Prelude.*—Divine Jesus, give me Thy peace, and fill me with such courage that, in order to preserve it, I may resist all the efforts of the world and hell.

1*st Point.*—Jesus desires that we possess His peace.

'These things have I spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace' (John xvi. 33). We do not sufficiently understand the preciousness of the peace which Jesus Christ offers us; let us try to comprehend it by a familiar comparison. When a kingdom possesses peace, prosperity accompanies it; its inhabitants rejoice in a happy liberty; its lands, cultivated with care, are productive of an abundant harvest; trade and industry increase daily its glory and its riches; in fine, a numerous population places it in a state to resist the attacks of all its enemies. Such is the state of each one in whom the peace of Jesus Christ reigns; free from the tyranny of passions which are held in subjection, nourished abundantly with all the graces of heaven, enriched with new merits at every instant, he prepares for himself an everlasting crown, and triumphs gloriously over all the efforts of hell. Happy condition! how can I fail to desire it, or refrain from labouring to procure it? The means offered me for this end are sweet and easy: love of Jesus, union with Jesus, some few combats fought in His sight, and with His help. O my Saviour, aid my weakness, and grant me grace to prepare as I should for the attainment of so priceless a gift!

2nd Point.—To preserve the peace of Jesus Christ, we must courageously resist the world.

'In the world you shall have distress; but have confidence, I have overcome the world' (John xvi. 33). The world, in the midst of which we are forced to live, is one of the most powerful enemies to our peace. If we follow its perverse maxims, we shall infallibly lose interior peace, and all the graces which result from it; if we resist the world, we arm all its malice against ourselves, and must expect to sustain hard combats. Yet this latter course is the only one we are allowed to follow; and if it exacts struggles, it also offers us hopes based on the surest and noblest foundations. 'Have confidence,' says our divine Lord, 'I have overcome the world.' What a happiness and advantage it is for us to combat under such a Leader, who has already overcome our enemies, and who will infallibly enable us to overcome them ourselves if we will it sincerely. Let us here recall to mind these words, on which we have already meditated: 'Nothing is impossible with God' (Luke i. 37); and again, these words of the great apostle: 'I can do all things in Him that strengthens me' (Phil. iv. 13). These grand and noble maxims ought to serve us as a defence against all sorts of attacks; but above all, when we feel our own weakness acutely, and the power of our spiritual enemies, we ought to hearken to Jesus whispering to us in the depths of our soul these words, so calculated to fill us with a holy courage: 'Have confidence, I have overcome the world.'

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us thank Him for having overcome our enemies, and for having deigned to encourage us so sweetly to overcome them ourselves. Let us humble ourselves for all our cowardice, and for having had the weakness to give the world and our passions so many advantages over us. Let us ask Him for the strength we need to triumph over ourselves and creatures, that so His love alone may rule within us.

Resolutions. — To combat earnestly our predominant fault. To brave human respect with courage.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—'Have confidence; I have overcome the world' (John xvi. 33).

Prayer.—Pater Noster.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CCXV.

THE PRAYER OF JESUS TO HIS FATHER.

'These things Jesus spoke, and, lifting up His eyes to heaven, He said: Father, the hour is come; glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son may glorify Thee, as Thou hast given Him power over all flesh, that He may give eternal life to all whom Thou hast given Him. Now this is eternal life: That they may know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ Whom Thou hast sent.'—JOHN xvii. 1-3.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—The same, page 264.

2*nd Prelude.*—Divine Jesus, grant me grace to know Thee, to love Thee, and to imitate Thee perfectly.

1*st Point.*—Jesus desires ardently to communicate eternal life to all men.

'Jesus lifting up His eyes to heaven said: Father, glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son may glorify Thee' (John xvii. 1). The glory which Jesus asks for here is that which the salvation of souls was to procure Him. He makes this known to us in the words which He immediately adds: 'Thou hast given Him power over all flesh, that He may give eternal life to all' (John xvii. 2). Oh! how immense is the charity of Jesus Christ! it extends to all creatures; there is not one single soul He does not cherish infinitely more than His own life; He is about to die to redeem them all, and if it were necessary He would

renew the torments He has to endure as many times as there are souls to save; His Sacred Heart, like unto a burning furnace, is consumed with love and zeal. Let us draw near to this divine furnace, there to dissolve the ice of our insensibility. O my Jesus, Who will open to me Thy Sacred Heart, that I may read therein what is the value of a soul, what the extent of the love Thou dost bear to all, and how vehement is the desire which presses Thee to hinder them from being lost! O my Saviour, Who will give me to share Thy sentiments, and to make use of every means to shut hell and open heaven for the souls Thou hast loved so much! Jesus! in the name of all the love Thou hast for them and for me, in the name of those chosen favours which have caused me to know Thy adorable Heart, enkindle in my soul an ardent zeal for the salvation of others, and deign to make use of me to gain souls for Thee.

2nd Point.— It is the knowledge and love of Jesus which leads souls to eternal life.

'This is eternal life: That they may know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ Whom Thou hast sent' (John xvii. 3). Souls are lost because they know neither God nor His Christ. If poor sinners knew the loving Heart of Jesus, if they had contemplated the infinite loveliness of that adorable Saviour Who unites in His Sacred Person all the perfections of a God, and all the virtues of the most holy and perfect man that ever existed; if they had experienced His ardent love, all earthly beauty and all the attractions of this world would inspire them only with indifference and contempt. Why do such senseless beings possess a heart, if it be not to love the One only Object infinitely deserving of love? . . . But why, O my divine Lord, do I myself love Thee so little? Eternal life consists in knowing Thee; can I say that I know Thee as I ought? Alas! I complain of the blindness of sinners, and I am blind myself, since, having commenced to know Thee, I have not used every means in my power to increase

in Thy knowledge and Thy love, in order to make Thee known and loved everywhere. Ah! pardon me, my Saviour; change my heart; grant that I may know no other care, use no other food, live no other life than to contemplate Thee unceasingly, in order to trace in myself Thy divine image, and make Thee known to all whom I can influence.

Colloquy with our Lord.—'Holy Father, eternal life consists in knowing Thee, and Jesus Christ Whom Thou hast sent' (John xvii. 3). I praise Thee and bless Thee in union with all creatures for having so greatly loved us as to send upon earth this divine Son, the object of Thy eternal love. Grant, O God, that we may know Him perfectly; open the eyes of our soul, cause us to contemplate that divine beauty which constitutes the joy and glory of heaven. O Jesus, perfect model of all virtues, Jesus our Saviour and our Lord, manifest Thyself unto me. Grant that I may know Thee, that I may love Thee, unite myself closely to Thee, and imitate Thee on earth, that so I may have the happiness to contemplate Thee in heaven, and to rejoice in Thee and with Thee for all eternity.

Resolutions.—To practise recollection, and to represent Jesus to ourselves under some one of the circumstances of His life, in order to conform our actions to His frequently in the day.

Offering of the Resolutions, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—'Holy Father, eternal life consists in knowing Thee, and Jesus Christ Whom Thou hast sent.' Divine Jesus, grant that I may know Thee.

Prayer.—Soul of Christ, etc., page 4.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CCXVI.

JESUS PRAYS NOT FOR THE WORLD.

'I have manifested Thy name to the men whom Thou hast given me out of the world . . . Now they have known that all things which Thou hast given Me are from Thee . . . They have known in very deed that I came out from Thee, and they have believed that Thou didst send Me. I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them whom Thou hast given Me; because they are Thine.'—JOHN xvii. 6-9.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude*, page 264.

2*nd Prelude.* — Divine Jesus, separate me more and more from the world and its wickedness, and unite me to Thee alone.

1*st Point.*—We ought to be strangers to the spirit of the world.

'I have manifested Thy name to the men whom Thou hast given Me out of the world.' The world is incapable of receiving the knowledge of heavenly things; we must separate ourselves from it if we would be instructed in the school of Jesus Christ; the air which is breathed in that region of death is pestilential; blindness in it is contagious; the light of Jesus cannot shine there, nor can His voice be heard there, because all hearts are fixed on the earth, given up to frivolity, without relish for the things of God, without any foresight for their eternal destiny. What gratitude do I not owe Thee, O Jesus, for having disabused me of its illusions! Thou hast looked on me and chosen me as Thou didst choose Thy apostles, to reveal to me the secrets Thou hast learnt of Thy Father: Thou hast told me that my heart was made for Thee, that Thou wert my God and Saviour; that created objects were not worthy of my affections; that Thou hast reserved for those who attach themselves to Thee a happiness far beyond anything that can be conceived, and Thou hast

sweetly drawn me to Thy service, by disabusing me of the errors which seduce this miserable world; Thou hast separated me from its corruption; I will bless Thee for this all the days of my life. O Lord, never permit me to be so weak as to resume its fetters after having been delivered from them by Thy infinite mercy.

2nd Point.—Jesus prays not for the world.

'I pray for them: I pray not for the world' (John xvii. 9). How awful are these words! What! Jesus, the God of goodness, the Saviour of the entire universe, Who is about to give the last drop of His Blood to save sinners, Jesus, Who has prayed for His own murderers, will not pray for the world? No: He has said it, and His Word is truth itself. He will pray for each worldling, that he may separate himself from the mass of perdition, that he may be converted and live, for He wills not the death of any sinner; but for the world, such as it is, wilfully blind, obdurate, perverse, ever causing scandal, He will not pray; His prayers, all divine as they are, would be useless; the anathema which He has fulminated against it will last till the end of time; because, until the end of all ages the world will be what it has ever been and still is: frivolous, impious, wicked, and hardened. Unto the end of time, Jesus and His Church will continue to repeat, 'Wo the world, because of its scandals' (Matt. xviii. 7). O world! object of the maledictions of my God; world, which causes the loss of all the souls that are so foolish as to listen to you; world, which may justly be called the school, the army, the visible power of Satan; I detest you and declare eternal hatred against you. O my Jesus! vouchsafe to strengthen me in these dispositions! But, O Lord, ought I to content myself with separating from the world, without interesting myself for the salvation of the unhappy souls in it? No, my Saviour, it is its spirit Thou hast reprobated; Thy hatred cannot extend to souls which have been purchased by Thy Blood. Have pity on them, then; rescue them from their blindness, and save them; but con-

firm all Thy true disciples in the contempt, detestation, and horror of the spirit and seductions of the world.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us thank Him with the most lively gratitude for having deigned to separate us from the world and to manifest Himself unto us. Let us beg of Him to disengage us more and more from all earthly affections, and from the illusions of the world. Let us promise Him to labour constantly to saturate our souls with His Spirit by following His example and imitating His virtues.

Resolution.—To separate ourselves more and more from the world, in mind and heart, by practising the virtues the most opposed to it: humility and mortification, especially of the interior.

Offering of the Resolution, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—I belong not to the world, but to Thee alone, O Jesus.

Prayer.—Receive, O Lord, etc., page 43.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CCXVII.

JESUS PRAYS FOR HIS DISCIPLES.

'Holy Father, keep them in Thy name whom Thou hast given Me; that they may be one, as We also are . . . They are not of the world, as I also am not of the world. I pray not that Thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldst keep them from evil.'—JOHN xvii. 11, seq.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude*, as before, page 264.

2*nd Prelude.*—Divine Jesus, grant to all Thy disciples the grace to be united by the most tender charity, and to resist, one and all, the contagion of the world.

1*st Point.*—Jesus prays that His disciples be united.

'Holy Father, keep them in Thy name whom Thou

hast given Me' (John xvii. 11). Jesus in this prayer manifests to us the desire He has to see the most intimate union reign between all those who belong to Him. The God of charity desires that His true disciples, although scattered amongst the different ranks of society, and occupied in divers ways, should nevertheless have but one heart and one soul, should all tend to the same end, and be always ready to help each other, as the various members of the body do, which all possess one life in common. What a spectacle for heaven and for earth, could we behold this sweet union reigning between all those who make profession of belonging to Jesus Christ; between all those souls, the special objects of the love of this divine Master, who, instructed in the school of His own Sacred Heart, ought to imbibe thence the same principles, and ought to fill themselves with the same Spirit! O my Jesus! from this precious union between Thy children, render them a spectacle to the world; on beholding them may all be forced to exclaim, with the pagans astonished at witnessing the great charity of the first Christians: 'See how they love one another!' Thou willest, O my divine Saviour, that Thy disciples be one with Thee, as Thou Thyself art One with Thy Father and with the Holy Ghost. May this wish of Thy divine Heart be realized! May those who have the happiness to belong to Thee be everywhere recognised by their most devoted charity and most perfect union.

2nd Point.—Jesus prays that His disciples may be preserved from the contagion of the world.

'They are not of the world; as I also am not of the world. I pray not that Thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldst keep them from evil' (John xvii. 14-15). Those who belong to Jesus Christ are separated from the world in heart. We have already meditated on this; however, this real opposition of sentiment and conduct does not prevent a great number from finding themselves engaged in worldly society, by the

arrangements of Providence, from which they cannot and ought not to withdraw. It is in favour of these that our divine Saviour addresses to His Father that touching prayer: 'I pray not that Thou shouldst take them from the world, but that Thou shouldst keep them from evil:' that is to say, from the contamination of sin, from the seduction of bad example, and the many dangers to which they are so exposed. Let us, then, console ourselves if we find ourselves engaged in any of those delicate positions which are so painful to timid souls: Jesus Christ has prayed for us, the divine protection surrounds us. Like unto the three young men cast into the Babylonian furnace, but miraculously preserved from the flames, because God was with them, we shall live in the midst of the world without taking up its spirit, or sharing in its corruption; without falling with it into the eternal abyss. O my Jesus! Thou knowest if my heart is a stranger to the follies of the children of the world. Thou knowest if it desires to belong to Thee. Ah! keep it, defend it, cause its weakness to triumph! May Thy divine Heart be its dwelling-place in the midst of the deluge of iniquity with which the world is covered, and when Thou shalt have broken the chains of its captivity, it will go forth to sing eternally the power of Thy grace and the amplitude of Thy goodness, in the abode of Thy glory.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us return Him humble and fervent acts of thanksgiving for the tender love of which He has given us so many proofs, and which induces Him at this time, when He is about to lay down His life for us, to commend us to the care of His heavenly Father. Let us beg of Him to bestow on us and on all Christians the spirit of charity and union. Let us also ask Him, both for ourselves and for others, the graces of preservation necessary to resist the seduction and contagion of the world.

Resolution.—To practise union and charity towards all those with whom we have to live.

Offering of the Resolution, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—Grant, O my Jesus, that we may all have but one heart and one soul in Thee.

Prayer.—Soul of Christ, etc., page 4.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CCXVIII.

CONTINUATION OF THE PRAYER OF JESUS CHRIST.

'And not for them only do I pray, but for them also who through their word shall believe in Me: that they all may be one, as Thou, Father, in Me, and I in Thee; that they also may be one in Us; that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me.'—JOHN xvii. 20, 21.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—The same, page 264.

2*nd Prelude.*—Divine Jesus, deign to unite me by the bands of love with all Thy disciples. I ask for them and for myself the grace of perfect charity.

1*st Point.*—Jesus desires that the union of His disciples should be as perfect as that which subsists between Himself and His Father.

'And not for them only do I pray, but for them also who through their word shall believe in Me: that they all may be one, as Thou, Father, in Me, and I in Thee; that they also may be one in Us' (John xvii. 20, 21). Jesus has just recommended His apostles to His Father. He now extends His tender solicitude to us and to all those who shall believe in Him up to the consummation of ages. He asks that we may be one with Him, as He Himself is One with the Father and the Holy Ghost. Let us remark under what circumstances He makes this request. It is on the same evening on which He has just instituted that Sacrament of His love which was to unite all Christians together and with Himself as the members of His mystical Body; the adorable Sacrament which, by uniting each of the faithful to the Flesh and Blood of Jesus

Christ, establishes between them, as it were, a consanguinity and divine brotherhood much closer and more sacred than that of nature. O God of love, all in Thy works is life, union, and charity. Never, never suffer so many wonders to remain without effect. Thou art going to die, O Jesus, to give death to sin and its dreadful consequences. Vouchsafe to fasten to Thy Cross all that can place any obstacle among us to union of hearts. May all hearts, attracted by the Sacred Wound of Thy opened Side, come and unite together, and become one with Thine, never more to be separated from it!

2nd Point.—Jesus desires that the union of His disciples should be in the eyes of the world a proof of His having come.

'As Thou, Father, in Me, and I in Thee; that they also may be one in Us; that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me' (John xvii. 21). The charity of the disciples of Jesus Christ ought to be great enough, their union close enough, for the world to be able to know on seeing them that the God of charity has become man, and that the law of love is established. If the glory of my divine Lord interests me, I ought to labour to perfect within myself this precious virtue; but what means shall I make use of for this end? O my Jesus! I will go and study this in Thy Sacred Heart. It is there that I shall learn how dear my neighbour is to Thee, and how much I myself ought to love him. There I shall draw meekness and patience to support the defects of others, humility to suffer willingly all coldness or injustice, tenderness and generosity to relieve all in their troubles, strength and constancy to love all at all times, and in all circumstances, without ever relaxing. In Thy Sacred Heart I shall master charity; in that divine Heart I shall receive the recompense of my love, for, O Jesus, Thou hast said: 'If anyone love Me and keep My commandments, My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him.' I will keep Thy commandments by

loving my neighbour as Thou dost bid me. I hope that, according to Thy promise, Thou wilt come to me and fix for ever Thy dwelling within my soul.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us adore Him as the God of love. Let us beg of Him to open unto us His divine Heart, and make us study therein the practice of that virtue which constitutes the character of His true disciples; and let us ask Him to grant us grace to practise it faithfully.

Resolution.—To practise meekness and cordiality towards others.

Offering of the Resolution, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—Grant, O my Jesus, that all hearts may be united in Thine.

Prayer.—Soul of Christ, etc., page 4.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CCXIX.

JESUS PRAYS THAT HIS DISCIPLES MAY BE EVERYWHERE WITH HIM.

'Father, I will that where I am, they also whom Thou hast given Me may be with Me; that they may see My glory which Thou hast given Me.'—JOHN xvii. 24.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—The same, page 264.

2*nd Prelude.*—My divine Lord, grant me grace to follow Thee to Calvary, that so I may one day have the happiness to enter the abode of Thy glory.

1*st Point.*—To be with Jesus, we must embrace suffering, humiliation, and privation.

'Father, I will that where I am, they also whom Thou hast given Me may be with Me' (John xvii. 24). Our adorable Saviour desires that we accompany Him everywhere. It is, indeed, just that the members should follow

their leader, and never separate from him. Where is our adorable Leader? In the crib, where He endures cold, privation, and poverty—at Nazareth, where He leads a life hidden, laborious, and ignored; in His evangelical missions, where He is contradicted and calumniated—where He endures numberless fatigues, often wanting common necessaries; last of all, in the Garden of Olives, in the house of the high priest, in the prætorium, on Calvary, where he is despised, outraged, overwhelmed with opprobrium, and plunged in a sea of grief; everywhere in humiliation, want, and suffering; nowhere in joys, glory, and riches. O my divine Jesus, how great is my weakness! I love Thee—I wish to follow Thee; and yet the view of the austere virtues I must practise in order to attain this end alarms and shocks me. O God all-powerful and mighty, the Author of life, God of combats and of victories, make me triumph over myself; teach me by the unction of Thy grace that it is in humiliation, pain, contradiction, and poverty that Thou art found. To reject all these is to withdraw from Thee; but to receive them with submission, and, if possible, with joy, is to become united to Thy adorable Heart, and to satisfy the desire Thou hast expressed when Thou didst say: 'My Father, I will that where I am, they also whom Thou hast given Me may be with Me.'

2nd Point.—If we are with Jesus on earth, we shall also be with Him in heaven.

'My Father, I will that where I am, they also whom Thou hast given Me may be with Me; that they may see My glory' (John xvii. 24). These last words explain why our divine Saviour wishes so ardently to see us share His humiliations and sufferings; it is by them that He has entered into His glory. It is because 'He was obedient unto death, even unto the death of the Cross,' that He has received 'a name which is above every name.' In like manner it is only through many tribulations and sufferings that we shall reach the abode of glory and

beatitude. How calculated this thought is to encourage us! During life we follow our adorable Lord in narrow and painful paths; yet awhile a little courage, and we shall soon be admitted to our heavenly country. There we shall contemplate the glory of our divine Leader, and share in it so much the more perfectly, as we shall have been more like unto Him on earth. O my Lord and Saviour, what is an entire life, even the longest one that can be imagined, passed in all that is most revolting to nature, in sufferings, humiliation, and poverty, if we compare it to that other life, where our least efforts will be so magnificently recompensed, and whose duration will be for all eternity? Ah, my Jesus! penetrate me with this sweet and precious hope. May it inspire me with a holy courage, and cause me to embrace with ardour all that can enable me to participate in Thy ignominies and Thy Cross.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us adore Him as the Head and Model of the elect. Let us thank Him for all that He has vouchsafed to suffer in order to save and instruct us. Let us ask His grace to imitate Him, and to unite ourselves closely to Him. Let us speak to Him intimately of our weaknesses and repugnances, and beg of Him the strength necessary to overcome them.

Resolution.—To overcome ourselves generously to-day in that which will cost us the most.

Offering of the Resolution, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—In order to follow Jesus in His glory, we must carry our Cross with Him willingly.

Prayer.—Soul of Christ, etc., page 4.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

MEDITATION CCXX.

THE END OF THE PRAYER OF JESUS.

'Just Father, the world hath not known Thee; but I have known Thee: and these have known that Thou hast sent Me. I have made known Thy name to them, and will make it known, that the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them, and I in them.'—JOHN xvii. 25, 26.

Preparatory Prayer, page 1.

1*st Prelude.*—The same, page 264.

2*nd Prelude.*—Jesus, my adorable Lord, separate me more and more from the world, and make me know Thy Father, as Thou hast Thyself known Him, and all the saints have known Him.

1*st Point.*—Jesus has caused us to know His Father; we must labour to know Him more and more.

'Just Father, the world hath not known Thee; but I have known Thee: and these have known that Thou hast sent Me' (John xvii. 25). Jesus, continuing His touching prayer, seems to cast a look on all He has done during His life to enlighten and convert the world: that world which He was about to leave, and which would see Him no more. A loving lamentation escapes at this moment from His adorable Heart: 'Just Father,' He says, 'the world hath not known Thee;' then, going back in affectionate thought to His dear disciples, He adds: 'But I have known Thee: and these have known that Thou hast sent Me. I have made known Thy name to them, and will make it known, that the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them, and I in them' (John xvii. 25, 26). Let us ponder carefully these last words of our God, our Father, and our Saviour; the world to the end has been deaf to His instructions. Ah! miserable world!—world blind and ungrateful! can I share thy sentiments and thy folly? . . . But Jesus has known His Father; He has known Him

with that loving knowledge which produces the most entire, constant, and perfect obedience. He has known Him, and has taught me to know Him; He promises, if I am faithful, to cause me to know Him yet more, that so, as He says, the love with which His Father has loved Him may be in me, and He Himself in me. O my Jesus! this is Thy latest wish. Ah! may it be mine also from this moment and to the end of my life! Yes, I will know and love Thy heavenly Father as Thou hast known and loved Him; I will obey Him as Thou hast obeyed Him, in order that the union of love Thou hast deigned to contract with me may last until the end of my life and be consummated in a happy eternity.

2nd Point.—Jesus has made us know His Father, that we may continue after His death the work which He commenced during His life.

'I have made known Thy name to them, and will make it known, that the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them, and I in them' (John xvii. 26). Jesus is about to terminate His mortal life, that life which He only took upon Him for the glory of His Father and the salvation of the world; but He desires that the great work which He commenced should be perpetuated to the end of the world. It is for this end that He has contracted the most perfect and intimate union with His disciples. He promises to live in them and in all His elect, that He may procure true adorers for the divine Majesty unto the end of ages, and claim for these living members of His mystical body the same love with which His Father has loved Him from all eternity. 'I have made known Thy name to them,' He says, 'and will make it known, that the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them, and I in them.' O my adorable Saviour! grant to me and to all Christians the grace to carry out Thy divine intentions! Cause us to understand fully that we ought to labour unceasingly to become like unto Thee, by a conformity of feeling, of will, and of actions, that so, when

the eyes of the Father of mercies are turned upon the earth, He may there behold anew His well-beloved Son living in each of His members, and rest with complacency in the light. The sin of one single man had corrupted the entire world; Thy adorable Blood is about to purify it. Ah! this valley of exile will become again the inheritance of the Lord. . . . O holy Father! hear the prayer that Jesus, Thy divine Son and our Brother, has addressed to Thee. Do not behold in us any longer the guilty children of Adam, but the living members of Jesus, His faithful images, and restore to us all our rights to Thy original benevolences; deign to send down on us from the highest heavens the abundance of Thy benedictions, and guard us with the protection Thou hast purchased for us.

Colloquy with our Lord.—Let us adore Him as our divine Head, our Saviour, and our tender Father. Let us offer Him humble acts of thanksgiving for the inestimable benefits He has granted us by making us become again the children of His Father and His privileged clients. Let us ask Him for the grace to profit as we should of so precious a favour.

Resolution.—To perform all our actions in union with Jesus.

Offering of the Resolution, page 3.

Spiritual Bouquet.—Grant, O my Jesus, that I may dwell in Thee and Thou in me, for the glory of Thy Father and the accomplishment of His designs.

Prayer.—Soul of Christ, etc., page 4.

Examen of the Meditation, page 4.

THE END.

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SISTER OF MERCY (Tr.).

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